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STRICTURES
ON THE
MODERN SYSTEM
OF
FEMALE EDUCATION.

WITH
VIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES AND CONDUCT PREVA-
LENT AMONG WOMEN OF RANK
AND FORTUNE.

—♦♦♦♦♦—
BY
HANNAH MORE.
—♦♦♦♦♦—

as you so raise your character that you may help to make the next
age a better thing, and leave posterity in your debt, for
the advantage it shall receive by your example.

Lord HALIFAX

—
TWO VOLUMES IN ONE—AND THIRD AMERICAN
EDITION, WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.
—

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1918



INTRODUCTION.

IT is a singular injustice which is often exercised towards women, first to give them a very defective education, and then to expect from them the most undeviating purity of conduct ;—to train them in such a manner as shall lay them open to the most dangerous faults, and then to censure them for not proving faultless. Is it not unreasonable and unjust, to express disappointment if our daughters should, in their subsequent lives, turn out precisely that very kind of character for which it would be evident to an unprejudiced by-stander that the whole scope and tenor of their instruction had been systematically preparing them ?

Some reflections on the present erroneous system are here with great deference submitted to public consideration. The Author is apprehensive that she shall be accused of betraying the interests of her sex by laying open their defects : but surely, an earnest wish to turn their attention to objects calculated to promote their true dignity, is not the office of an enemy. So to expose the weakness of the land as to suggest the necessity of internal improvement, and to point out the means of effectual defence, is not treachery, but patriotism.

Again, it may be objected to this little work, that many errors are here ascribed to women which by no means belong to them *exclusively*, and that it seems to confine to the sex those faults which are common to the species : but this is in some measure unavoidable. In speaking on the qualities of one sex, the moralist is somewhat in the situation of the Geographer, who :

treating on the nature of one country :—the air, soil, and produce of the land which he is describing, cannot fail in many essential points to resemble those of other countries under the same parallel ; yet it is his business to descant on the one without adverting to the other ; and though in drawing his map he may happen to introduce some of the neighbouring coast, yet his principal attention must be confined to that country which he proposes to describe, without taking into account the resembling circumstances of the adjacent shores.

It may be also objected that the opinion here suggested on the state of manners among the higher classes of our country-women, may seem to controvert the just encomiums of modern travellers, who generally concur in ascribing a decided superiority to the ladies of this country over those of every other. But such is, in general, the state of foreign manners, that the comparative praise is almost an injury to *English* women. To be flattered for excelling those whose standard of excellence is very low, is but a degrading kind of commendation ; for the value of all praise derived from superiority, depends on the worth of the competitor. The character of British ladies, with all the unparalleled advantages they possess, must never be determined by a comparison with the women of other nations, but by comparing them with what they themselves might be, if all their talents and unrivalled opportunities were turned to the best account.

Again, it may be said, that the Author is less disposed to expatiate on excellence than error : but the office of the historian of human manners is delineation rather than panegyric. Were the end in view eulogium and not improvement, eulogium would have been far more gratifying, nor would just objects for praise have been difficult to find. Even in her own limited sphere of observation, the Author is acquainted with much excellence in the class of which she treats ;—with women who, possessing learning which would be
 ight extensive in the other sex, set an example of
 umility to their own ;—women who, distin-
 for wit and genius, are eminent for domestic

qualities ;—who, excelling in the fine arts, have carefully enriched their understandings ;—who, enjoying great affluence, devote it to the glory of God ;—who, possessing elevated rank, think their noblest style and title is that of a Christian.

That there is also much worth which is little known, she is persuaded ; for it is the modest nature of goodness to exert itself quietly, while a few characters of the opposite cast seem, by the rumour of their exploits, to fill the world ; and by their noise to multiply their numbers. It often happens that a very small party of people, by occupying the fore-ground, by seizing the public attention, and monopolizing the public talk, contrive to appear to be the great body : a few active spirits, provided their activity take the wrong turn and support the wrong cause, seem to fill the scene ; and a few disturbers of order, who have the talent of thus exciting a false idea of their multitudes by their mischiefs, actually gain strength, and swell their numbers, by this fallacious arithmetic.

But the present work is no more intended for a panegyric on those purer characters who seek not human praise because they act from a higher motive, than for a satire on the avowedly licentious, who, urged by the impulse of the moment, resist no inclination ; and, led away by the love of fashion, dislike no censure, so it may serve to rescue them from neglect or oblivion.

There are, however, multitudes of the young and the well-disposed, who have as yet taken no decided part, who are just launching on the ocean of life, just about to lose their own right convictions, virtually preparing to counteract their better propensities, and unreluctantly yielding themselves to be carried down the tide of popular practices : sanguine, thoughtless, and confident of safety.—To these the Author would gently hint, that, when once embarked, it will be no longer easy to say to their passions, or even to their principles, “ Thus far shall ye go, and no further.” Their struggles will grow fainter, their resistance will become feeble, till borne down by the confluence of example.

temptation, appetite, and habit; resistance and order will soon be the only things of which they learn to be ashamed.

Should any reader revolt at what is conceived unwarranted strictness in this little book, let it be thrown by in disgust before the following short consideration be weighed.—If in this Christian country we are actually beginning to regard the solemnity of Baptism as merely furnishing an article to the register;—if we are learning from our indefatigable Teachers, to consider this Christian rite as a legal ceremony retained for the sole purpose of recording *age* of our children;—then, indeed, the prevailing system of Education and Manners on which these volumes presume to animadvert, may be adopted with propriety, and persisted in with safety, without entailing on our children, or on ourselves, the peril of broken promises, or the guilt of violated vows.—But, if the obligation which Christian Baptism imposes, be really binding;—if the ordinance has, indeed, a meaning beyond a mere secular transaction, beyond a record of names and dates;—if it be an institution by which a child is solemnly devoted to God as his Father, to Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and to the Holy Spirit as his Sanctifier; if there be no definite period assigned for the obligation of fulfilling the duties it enjoins to be superseded;—if, having once dedicated our offspring to their Creator, we no longer dare to mock Him by bringing them up in ignorance of His will and nature, or of His laws;—if, after having enlisted them under the banners of Christ, to fight manfully against the great enemies of mankind, we are no longer at liberty to let them lay down their arms; much less to permit them to act as if they were in alliance instead of in hostility with these enemies;—if, after having promised that they shall renounce the vanities of the world, we are not allowed to invalidate the engagement;—if, under such a covenant we should tremble to make the vain and empty vanities the supreme object of our own, or of *their* instruction;—if all this be really so, then, indeed, the abuses on Modern Education in the first of these volumes, and on the Habits of polished Life in

second, will not be found so repugnant to truth, and reason, and common sense, as may on a first view be supposed.

But if on candidly summing up the evidence, the design and scope of the Author be fairly judged, not by the customs or opinions of the worldly, (for every English subject has a right to object to a suspected or prejudiced jury,) but by an appeal to that divine law which is the only infallible rule of judgment; if on such an appeal her views and principles shall be found censurable for their rigour, absurd in their requisitions, or preposterous in their restrictions, she will have no right to complain of such a verdict, because she will then stand condemned by that court to whose decision she implicitly submits.

Let it not be suspected that the Author arrogantly conceives *herself* to be exempt from that natural corruption of the heart which it is one chief object of this slight work to exhibit; that the superciliously erects herself into the impeccable censor of her sex and of the world; as if from the critic's chair she were coldly pointing out the faults and errors of another order of beings, in whose welfare she had not that lively interest which can only flow from the tender and intimate participation of fellow-feeling:

With a deep self-abasement, arising from a strong conviction of being indeed a partaker in the same corrupt nature; together with a full persuasion of the many and great defects of these volumes, and a sincere consciousness of her inability to do justice to a subject which, however, a sense of duty impelled her to undertake, she commits herself to the candour of that Public which has so frequently, in her instance, accepted a right intention as a substitute for a powerful performance.

BATH,
March 14, 1799.

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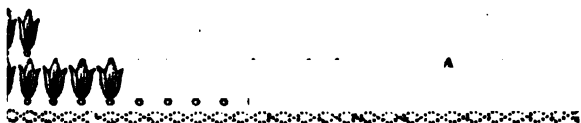
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STRICTURES ON THE MODERN SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION.

CHAP. I.

addresses to women of rank and fortune, on the effects of their influence on society.—Suggestions for the exertion of it in various instances.

AMONG the talents for the application of which women of the higher class will be peculiarly accountable, there is one, the importance of which they can scarcely rate too highly. This talent is Influence. We read of the greatest orator of antiquity, that the wisest plans which it had cost him years to frame, a woman could overturn in a single day ; and when we consider the variety of mischiefs which an ill-directed influence has been known to produce, we are led to reflect with the most sanguine hope on the beneficial effects to be expected from the same powerful force when exerted in its true direction.

The general state of civilized society depends more than those are aware who are not accustomed to scrutinize into the springs of human action, on the prevailing sentiments and habits of women, and on the nature :

degree of the estimation in which they are held. Even those who admit the power of female elegance on the manners of men, do not always attend to the influence of female principles on their character. In the former case, indeed, women are apt to be sufficiently conscious of their power, and not backward in turning to account. But there are noble objects to be effected by the exertion of their powers, and unfortunately, ladies, who are often unreasonably confident where they ought to be diffident, are sometimes capriciously diffident just when they ought to feel where their true importance lies; and, feeling, to exert it. To use the boasted power over mankind to no higher purpose than the gratification of vanity or the indulgence of pleasure is the degrading triumph of those fair victims of luxury, caprice, and despotism, whom the laws and the religion of the voluptuous prophet of Arabia exclude from light, and liberty, and knowledge: and it is humbling to reflect, that in those countries in which fondness for the mere persons of women is carried to the highest excess, *they are slaves*; and that their moral and intellectual degradation increases in direct proportion to the adoration which is paid to mere external charms.

But I turn to the bright reverse of this mortifying scene; to a country where our sex enjoys the blessing of liberal instruction, of reasonable laws, of a pure religion, and all the endearing pleasures of an equal social, virtuous, and delightful intercourse: I turn with an earnest hope, that women, thus richly endowed with the bounties of Providence, will not content themselves with polishing, when they are able to reform; with entertaining, when they may awaken and with captivating for a day, when they may bring into action powers of which the effects may be commensurate with eternity.

In this moment of alarm and peril, I would call them with a "warning voice," which should stir every latent principle in their minds, and kindle every smothered energy in their hearts: I would call them to come forward, and contribute their full attention towards the saving of their country.

it I would call on them to come forward, without parting from the refinement of their character, without derogating from the dignity of their rank, without blemishing the delicacy of their sex : I would call all them to the best and most appropriate exertion of their power, to raise the depressed tone of public morals, and to awaken the drowsy spirit of religious principle. They know too well how arbitrarily they give the law to manners, and with how despotic a sway they fix the standard of fashion. But this is not enough ; this is a low mark, a prize not worthy of their high and holy calling. For, on the use which women of the superior class may now be disposed to make of that power delegated to them by the courtesy of custom, by the honest gallantry of the heart, by the imperious control of virtuous affections, by the habits of civilized states, by the usages of polished society ; on the use, I say, which they shall hereafter make of this influence, will depend, in no low degree, the well-being of those states, and the virtue and happiness, nay, perhaps the very existence, of that society.

At this period, when our country can only hope to stand by opposing a bold and noble *unanimity* to the most tremendous confederacies against religion, and order, and governments, which the world ever saw ; what an accession would it bring to the public strength, could we prevail on beauty, and rank, and talents, and virtue, confederating their several powers, to exert themselves with a patriotism at once firm and feminine, for the general good ! I am not sounding an alarm to female warriors, or exciting female politicians : I hardly know which of the two is the most disgusting and unnatural character. Propriety is to a woman what the great Roman critic says action is to an orator ; it is the first, the second, the third requisite. A woman may be knowing, active, witty, and amusing ; but without propriety she cannot be amiable. Propriety is the centre in which all the lines of duty and of agreeableness meet. It is to character what proportion is to figure, and grace to attitude. It does not depend on any one perfection, but it is the result of general excellence. It shews itself by a rep

ular, orderly, undeviating course; and never far from its sober orbit into any splendid eccentricities for it would be ashamed of such praise as it might court by any deviations from its proper path. It renounces all commendation but what is characteristic and I would make it the criterion of true taste, right principle, and genuine feeling, in a woman, whether she would be less touched with all the flattery of romantic and exaggerated panegyric than with the beautiful picture of correct and elegant propriety which Milton draws of our first mother, when he delineates

“ Those thousand *decencies* which daily flow
“ From all her words and actions.”

Even the influence of religion is to be exercised with discretion. A female Polemic wanders nearly as far from the limits prescribed to her sex, as a female Machiavel or warlike Thalestris. Fierceness has made almost as few converts as the sword, and both are peculiarly ungraceful in a female. Even *religious* violence has human tempers of its own to indulge, and is gratifying itself when it would be thought to be serving God. Let not the bigot place her natural passions to the account of Christianity, or imagine she is pious when she is only passionate. Let her bear in mind that a Christian doctrine is always to be defended with a Christian spirit, and not make herself amenable by the stoutness of her orthodoxy for the badness of her temper. Many, because they defend a religious opinion with pertinacity, seem to fancy that they thereby acquire a kind of right to withhold the meekness and obedience which should be necessarily involved in the principle.

But the character of a consistent Christian is as carefully to be maintained, as that of a fiery disputant is to be avoided; and she who is afraid to avow her principles, or ashamed to defend them, has little claim to that honorable title. A profligate, who laughs at the most sacred institutions, and keeps out of the way of every thing which comes under the appearance of formal instruction, may be disconcerted by the modest but spirited rebuke of a delicate woman, whose li-

ns the doctrines which her conversation defends : she who administers reproof with ill-breeding, de-
 the effect of her remedy. On the other hand,
 s is a dishonest way of labouring to conciliate
 favour of a whole company, though of characters
 principles irreconcilably opposite. The words
 be so guarded as not to shock the believer, while
 eye and voice may be so accommodated, as not to
 urage the infidel. She who, with a half-earnest-
 , trims between the truth and the fashion ; who,
 e she thinks it credible to defend the cause of re-
 n, yet does it in a faint tone, a studied ambiguity
 hrase, and a certain expression in her countenance,
 ch proves that she is not displeased with what she af-
 s to censure, or that she is afraid to lose her reputa-
 for wit, in proportion as she advances her credit for
 r, injures the cause more than he who attacked it ;
 he proves, either that she does not believe what she
 esses, or that she does not reverence what fear com-
 her to believe. But this is not all : she is called
 not barely to repress impiety, but to excite, to en-
 age, and to cherish every tendency to serious reli-

ome of the occasions of contributing to the general
 l which are daily presenting themselves to la-
 , are almost too minute to be pointed out. Yet
 he good which right-minded women, anxiously
 ching these minute occasions, and adroitly seizing
 n, might accomplish, we may form some idea by
 ill-effects which we actually see produced, through
 mere levity, carelessness, and inattention, (to say no
 se,) of some of those ladies, who are looked up to
 andards in the fashionable world.

am persuaded, if a woman of fashion, who is now
 minating unintended mischief, under the danger-
 notion that there is no harm in any thing short of
 ive vice, and under the false colours of that indo-
 humility, " What good can *I* do ?" could be
 ght to see in its collected force the annual aggre-
 of the random evil she is daily doing, by constant-
 rowing a *little* casual weight into the wrong scale,

by mere inconsiderate and unguarded chat, she would start from her self-complacent dream. If she could conceive how much she may be diminishing the good impressions of *young* men ; and if she could imagine how little amiable levity or irreligion makes her appear in the eyes of those who are older and abler, (however loose their own principles may be,) she would correct herself in the first instance, from pure good nature ; and in the second, from worldly prudence and mere self-love. But on how much higher principles would she restrain herself, if she habitually took into account the important doctrine of consequences : and if she reflected that the lesser but more habitual corruptions make up by their number, what they may seem to come short of by their weight : then perhaps she would find that, among the higher class of women, *inconsideration* is adding more to the daily quantity of evil than almost all other causes put together.

There is an instrument of inconceivable force, when it is employed against the interests of Christianity : it is not reasoning, for that may be answered ; it is not learning, for luckily the infidel is not seldom ignorant ; it is not invective, for we leave so coarse an engine to the hands of the vulgar ; it is not evidence, for happily we have that all on our side : it is RIDICULE, the most deadly weapon in the whole arsenal of impiety, and which becomes an almost unerring shaft when directed by a fair and fashionable hand. No maxim has been more readily adopted, or is more intrinsically false, than that which the fascinating eloquence of a noble sceptic of the last age contrived to render so popular, that "ridicule is the test of truth*." It is no test of truth itself ; but of their firmness who assert the cause of truth, it is indeed a severe test. This light, keen, missile weapon, the irresolute, unconfirmed Christian will find it harder to withstand, than the whole heavy artillery of infidelity united.

A young man of the better sort, has, perhaps just entered upon the world, with a certain share of good dispositions and right feelings ; neither ignorant of the sciences, nor destitute of the principles of Christiani-

* Lord Shaftsbury.

te; without parting with his respect for religion, he sets out with the too natural wish of making himself a reputation, and of standing well with the fashionable part of the female world. He preserves for a time a horror of vice, which makes it not difficult for him to resist the grosser corruptions of society; he can as yet repel profaneness; nay, he can withstand the banter of a club. He has sense enough to see through the miserable fallacies of the new philosophy, and spirit enough to expose its malignity. So far he does well, and you are ready to congratulate him on his security. You are mistaken: the principles of the ardent, and hitherto promising adventurer are shaken, just in that very society where, while he was looking for pleasure, he doubted not for safety. In the company of certain women of good fashion and no ill fame, he makes shipwreck of his religion. He sees them treat with levity or derision subjects which he has been used to hear named with respect. He could confute an argument, he could unravel a sophistry; but he cannot stand a laugh. A sneer, not at the truth of religion, (for that perhaps is by none of the party disbelieved,) but at its gravity, its unseasonableness, its dulness, puts all his resolution to flight. He feels his mistake, and struggles to recover his credit; in order to which, he adopts the gay affectation of trying to seem worse than he really is; he goes on to say things which he does not believe, and to deny things which he does believe; and all to efface the first impression, and to recover a reputation which he has committed to *their* hands on whose report he knows he shall stand or fall, in those circles in which he is ambitious to shine.

That cold compound of irony, irreligion, selfishness, and sneer, which make up what the French, (from whom we borrow the thing as well as the word) so well express by the term *persiflage*, has of late years made an incredible progress in blasting the opening buds of piety in young persons of fashion. A cold pleasantry, a temporary cant word, the jargon of the day (for the "great vulgar" have their jargon) blights the first promise of seriousness. The ladies of *ton* have certain watch-wards, which may be detected as indi-

cations of this spirit. The clergy are spoken of under the contemptuous appellation of *the Parjans*. Some ludicrous association is infallibly combined with every idea of religion. If a warm-hearted youth has ventured to name with enthusiasm some eminently pious character, his glowing ardor is extinguished with a laugh : and a drawling declaration, that the person in question is really a mighty *harmless* good creature, is uttered in a tone which leads the youth secretly to vow, that whatever else he may be, he will never be a good harmless creature.

Nor is ridicule more dangerous to true piety than to true taste. An age which values itself on parody, burlesque, irony, and caricature, produces little that is sublime, either in genius or in virtue ; but they *amuse*, and we live in an age which *must* be amused, though genius, feeling, truth, and principle, be the sacrifice. Nothing chills the ardour of devotion like a frigid sarcasm ; and, in the season of youth, the mind should be kept particularly clear of all light associations. This is of so much importance that I have known persons who, having been early accustomed to certain ludicrous combinations, were never able to get their minds cleansed from the impurities contracted by this habitual levity, even after a thorough reformation in their hearts and lives had taken place : their principles became reformed, but their imaginations were indelibly soiled. They could desist from sins which the strictness of Christianity would not allow them to commit, but they could not dismiss from their minds images, which her purity forbade them to entertain.

There was a time when a variety of epithets were thought necessary to express various kinds of excellence, and when the different qualities of the mind were distinguished by appropriate and discriminating terms ; when the words venerable, learned, sagacious, profound, acute, pious, worthy, ingenious, valuable, elegant, agreeable, wise, witty, were used as specific marks of distinct characters. But the legislators of fashion have of late years thought proper to comprize all merit in one established epithet ; an epithet which, it must be confessed, is a very desirable one as far as it goes

This term is exclusively and indiscriminately applied wherever commendation is intended. The word *pleasant* now serves to combine and express all moral and intellectual excellence. Every individual, from the gravest professors of the gravest profession, down to the trifler who is of no profession at all, must earn the epithet of *pleasant*, or must be contented to be nothing; and must be consigned over to ridicule, under the vulgar and inexpressive cant word of a *bore*. This is the mortifying designation of many a respectable man, who though of much worth and much ability, cannot perhaps clearly make out his letters patent to the title of *pleasant*. For, according to this modern classification there is no intermediate state, but all are comprised within the ample bounds of one or the other of these two comprehensive terms.

We ought to be more on our guard against this spirit of ridicule, because whatever may be the character of the present day, its faults do not spring from the redundancies of great qualities, or the overflowings of extravagant virtues. It is well if more correct views of life, a more regular administration of laws, and a more settled state of society, have helped to restrain the excesses of the heroic ages, when love and war were considered as the great and sole businesses of human life. Yet, if that period was marked by a romantic extravagance, and the present is distinguished by an indolent selfishness, our superiority is not so triumphantly decisive, as, in the vanity of our hearts, we may be ready to imagine.

I do not wish to bring back the frantic reign of chivalry, nor to reinstate women in that fantastic empire in which they then sat enthroned in the hearts, or rather in the imaginations of men. Common sense is an excellent material of universal application, which the sagacity of latter ages has seized upon, and rationally applied to the business of common life. But let us not forget, in the insolence of acknowledged superiority, that it was *religion* and *chastity* operating on the romantic spirit of those times, which established the despotic sway of woman; and though in this altered scene of things,

she now no longer looks down on her adoring from the pedestal to which an absurd idolatry had raised her ; yet let her remember that it is the religion and the same chastity which once raised her to such an elevation, that must still furnish the energies of her character ; must still attract attention, still retain the respect of the other sex.

While we lawfully ridicule the absurdities we have abandoned, let us not plume ourselves with a spirit of novelty which glories in the opposite. If the manners of the period in question were such, and if the gallantry was unnatural, yet the virtue was high ; and let us remember that chastity, and honour, are not ridiculous in themselves, though they may unluckily be associated with vices which are so ; and women of delicacy would not reflect, when descanting on those explorations, how far it be decorous to deride with raillery, attachments which could subsist on mutual gratifications ; or grossly to ridicule the tale which led the admirer to sacrifice pleasure to respect, or devotion to honour ; how far it be delicate to sneer at a purity which made self-denial a proof of affection, or to call in question the sound understanding of a man who preferred the fame of his mistress to his own income, or to burlesque that antiquated refinement which considered dignity and reserve as additional titles to respect and reverence.

We cannot but be struck with the contrast exhibited to our view, when we compare the opposite manners of the two periods in question. In the former, all the flower of Europe smit with the spirit of gallantry ; all that was young, and noble, and brave, and great, with a fanatic frenzy, and a glorious contempt of danger, traversed seas, and scaled mountains, and compassed a large portion of the globe at the expence of ease, and fortune, and life, in an unprofitable project of rescuing, by force, the children from the hands of infidels, the sepulchre of our Saviour, whom, *in the other period*, their posterity think it the height of fanaticism so much to neglect him in good company. That Saviour whose a

on to that Democracy with which they conceive
clity to be associated, rather than from an abhor-
of impiety for its own sake ; too many deprecate
large of irreligion, as the supposed badge of a rep-
ed party, more than on account of that moral cor-
m which is its inseparable concomitant.

the other hand, in an age when inversion is the
cter of the day, the modern idea of improve-
does not consist in altering, but extirpating. We
it reform, but subvert. We do not correct old
ns, but demolish them ; fancying that when eve-
ing shall be new it will be perfect. Not to have
wrong, but to have been at all, is the crime.
ence is sin. Excellence is no longer considered
an experimental thing which is to grow gradually
f observation and practice, and to be improved by
accumulating additions brought by the wisdom of
five ages. *Our wisdom* is not a creature slowly
ght, by ripening time and gradual growth, to per-
on ; but is an instantaneously created goddess,
h starts at once, full grown, mature, armed cap-a-
from the heads of our modern thunderers. Or
r, if I may change the allusion, a perfect system
r expected inevitably to spring spontaneously at
like the fabled bird of Arabia from the ashes of

This tearing system has unquestionably rent away some valuable parts of that strong, rich, native stuff which formed the ancient texture of British manners. That we have gained much I am persuaded; that we have lost nothing I dare not therefore affirm. I though it fairly exhibits a mark of our improved judgment to ridicule the fantastic notions of love and heroism in the heroic ages; let us not rejoice that the spirit of generosity in sentiment, and of ardour in picture the exuberancies of which were then so inconvenient are now sunk as unreasonably low. That revolution in taste and manners which the unparalleled wit and genius of Don Quixote so happily effected throughout all the polished countries of Europe, by abolishing extravagancies the most absurd and pernicious, was far imperfect, that some virtues which he never meant to expose, unjustly fell into disrepute with the absurdities which he did: and it is become the turn of the present taste inseparably to attach in no small degree to that which is ridiculous to that which is serious and heroic. Some modern works of wit have assisted in bringing piety and some of the noblest virtues into contempt by studiously associating them with oddity, childish simplicity, and ignorance of the world: and unnecessary pains have been taken to extinguish that zeal and ardour, which, however liable to excess and error, is yet the spring of whatever is great and excellent in the human character. The novel of Cervantes is incomparable; the Tartuffe of Moliere is unequalled; but true generosity and true religion will never lose anything of their intrinsic value, because knight errantry and hypocrisy are legitimate objects for satire.

But to return from this too long digression, to the subject of female influence. Those who have not watched the united operation of vanity and feeling in a youthful mind, will not conceive how much less formidable the ridicule of all his own sex will be to a young man, than that of those women to whom he has been taught to look up, as the arbiters of elegance. Such a youth, I doubt not, might be able to work himself up by the force of genuine Christian principles, to such a pitch of true heroism, as to refuse a challenge

it requires more real courage to refuse a challenge to accept one,) who would yet be in danger of regressing into the dreadful pusillanimity of the world, he is told that no woman of fashion will hereafter look on him but with contempt. While we have cast away the rubbish of the Gothic ages, it were to be wished we had not retained the most criminal of all institutions. Why chivalry should indicate a man, while its leading object, the *single combat*, designates a gentleman, has not yet been explained. Nay, the plausible original motive is lost, while the practice is continued; for the fighter of the age no longer *pretends* to be a glorious redresser of the wrongs of strangers; no longer considers himself as directly appealing to heaven for the justice of his cause; no longer, from the slavish fear of unmerited reproach, often hazarding the happiness of his nearest connections, and always coming forth in direct defiance of an acknowledged command of the Almighty. Perhaps there are few occasions on which female influence can be exerted to a higher purpose than on this, in which laws and conscience have hitherto effected so little. But while the duellist (who perhaps becomes a duellist only because he was first a seducer) is welcomed with smiles; the more hardy dignified youth, who, because he fears man but God, declines a challenge; who is resolved to brave disgrace rather than commit himself to be treated with cool contempt by those very persons to whose esteem he might reasonably have looked as one of the rewards of his true and substantial virtue.

How then is it to be reconciled with the decisions of public opinion, that delicate women should receive with complacency the successful libertine, who has been detected in the arms of the wretched father or the injured husband in a commercial commerce, the discovery of which has too banished the unhappy partner of his crime from our society? Nay, if he happens to be very handsome, or very brave, or very fashionable, is there not sometimes a kind of dishonourable competition for his attentions? Is there not a sort of bad popularity attached to his attentions? But, whether his flattering reception

be derived from birth, or parts, or person, or (what is often a substitute for all) from his having made his way into *good company*, women of distinction follow the fashion of virtue by the too visible pleasure they sometimes express at the attentions of such a popular libel, whose voluble small-talk they admire, whose sprightly sayings they quote, whose vices they justify or excuse, and whom perhaps their very favour tends to prevent from becoming a better character, because he finds himself more acceptable as he is.

May I be allowed to introduce a new part of my subject, by remarking that it is a matter of incontestable importance, though not perhaps sufficiently considered, when any popular work, not on a religious topic, or on any common subject, such as politics, history, or science, has happened to be written by an author who professes Christian principles? It may not have been necessary, nor prudently practicable, to have a single religious principle in the whole work professedly religious: but still, the living principle informs the mind of the writer, and is almost impossible but that something of its spirit diffuses itself even into subjects with which it does not seem but remotely connected. It is at least a comfort to the reader, to feel that honest confidence which results from knowing that he has put himself in the hands of a man whose known principles are a pledge that his conduct need not be driven to watch himself at every step, and anxious circumspection; that he need not be led on the right hand and on the left, as if he knew there were pitfalls under the flowers which are deluding him. And it is no small point gained, that on subjects in which you do not look to *improve your* religion, at least secured from deterioration. If the Athenian Laws were so delicate that they disgraced any one who shewed an inquiring traveller the wrong road, what grace, among Christians, should attach to that a man who, when a youth, is inquiring the road to his philosophy, directs him to blasphemy and unbelief.

* The Author has often heard it mentioned as a matter of regret that Mr. Gibbon should have blemished his elegant history by two notoriously offensive chapters against Christianity. But

animadverting farther on the reigning evils which times more particularly demand that women of and influence should repress, Christianity calls upon them to bear their decided testimony against every which is notoriously contributing to the public opinion. It calls upon them to banish from their sitting-rooms, (and O, that their influence could banish from the libraries of their sons and husbands!) that and unsuspected mass of mischief, which, by assuming the plausible names of Science, of Philosophy, Arts, of Belles Lettres, is gradually administering to the principles of those who would be on their guard, had the poison been labelled with its own pernicious title. Avowed attacks upon revelation are easily resisted, because the malignity is advertised. Who suspects the destruction which lurks under the sleek or instructive names of *General History, Natural History, Travels, Voyages, Lives, Encyclopedias, Criticism, Romance*? Who will deny that many of these works contain much admirable matter; brilliant passages, important facts, just descriptions, faithful pictures of nature, and valuable illustrations of science? But while a dead fly lies at the bottom," the whole will exude a corrupt and pestilential stench.

Novels, which chiefly used to be dangerous in one respect, are now become mischievous in a thousand ways. They are continually shifting their ground, and enlarging their sphere, and are daily becoming vehicles for mischief. Sometimes they concentrate their force, and are at once employed to diffuse destructive principles, deplorable profligacy, and impudent infidelity. Rousseau was the first popular dispenser of this complicated drug, in which the deleterious infusion

regret seem to imply that the work would, by this omission, have been left safe and unexceptionable? May we not rather consider these errors as a fatal rock indeed; but as a rock enlightened by a beacon, and unequivocally warning us of the surrounding perils.—To forget the metaphor—Had not the mischiefs of these chapters been rendered thus conspicuous, the incautious reader would have been still exposed to the fatal effects of the more disguised poison which is introduced through almost every part of the volumes. Is it not obvious that it is so virulent against revealed religion as these two chapters indubitably would be incessantly pouring out some of its infectious matter on every occasion; and would even industriously make the opportunities which it did not find?

was strong, and the effect proportionably fatal. For he does not attempt to seduce the affections but through the medium of the principles. He does not paint an innocent woman ruined, repenting, and restored; but with a far more mischievous refinement, he annihilates the value of chastity, and with pernicious subtlety attempts to make his heroine appear almost more amiable without it. He exhibits a virtuous woman, the victim not of temptation, but of reason—not of vice, but of sentiment—not of passion, but of conviction; and strikes at the very root of honour, by elevating a crime into a principle. With a metaphysical sophistry, the most plausible, he debauches the heart of woman, by cherishing her vanity in the erection of a system of male virtues, to which, with a lofty dereliction of those that are her more peculiar and characteristic praise, he tempts her to aspire; powerfully insinuating, that to this splendid system chastity does not necessarily belong: thus corrupting the judgment, and bewildering the understanding, as the most effectual way to inflame the imagination and deprave the heart.

The rare mischief of this author, consists in his power of seducing by falsehood those who love truth but whose minds are still wavering, and whose principles are not yet formed. He allures the warm-hearted to embrace vice, not because they prefer vice, but because he gives to vice so natural an air of virtue and ardent and enthusiastic youth, too confidently trusting in their integrity and in their teacher, will be undone, while they fancy they are indulging in the noblest feelings of their nature. Many authors will more infallibly complete the ruin of the loose and ill disposed: but perhaps there never was a net of such exquisite art, and inextricable workmanship, spread to entangle innocence, and ensnare inexperience, as the writings of Rousseau: and, unhappily, the victim does not even struggle in the toils, because part of the delusion consists in imagining that he is set at liberty.

Some of our recent popular publications have adopted and enlarged all the mischiefs of this school; and the principal evil arising from them is, that the virtuous

hibit are almost more dangerous than the vices. Chief materials out of which these delusive systems are formed, are characters who practice superfluous generosity, while they are trampling on obvious commanded duties ; who combine inflated sentiment of honour with actions the most flagitious ; a love of self-confidence, with a perpetual neglect and denial : pathetic apostrophes to the passions, but exempt to resist them. They teach, that chastity is no individual attachment ; that no duty exists which is not prompted by feeling ; that impulse is the spring of virtuous actions, while laws and religion are only unjust restraints ; the former imposed on arbitrary men, the latter by the absurd prejudices of ignorant and unenlightened conscience. Alas ! who does not know that the best creature of impulse ever lived, is but a wayward, unfixed, unprincipled being ! That the best *natural* man requires a balance and needs that balance to the affections which religion alone can furnish, and without which benevolent propensities are no security to virtue. And as it is not too much to say, in spite of the motto of benevolence to which the new philosophy lays claim, that the *human* duties of the second table have once been well performed by any of the rejecters of that previous portion of the Decalogue which is duty to *God*.

Some of the most splendid of these characters of religion is erected into the throne of justice, and degraded into the rank of plebian virtues. It is regarded as a noble exemplification of sentiment that the poor should be defrauded, while the money due to them is lavished in dazzling acts of charity to some great man that affects the senses ; which paroxysms of benevolence are made the sponge of every sin, and the substitute of every virtue : the whole indirectly tending to make how very *benevolent people are who are not Christians*. From many of these compositions, indeed, religion is systematically, and always virtually, excluded ; for the law, and the prophets, and the gospel, take no part of the scheme in which this world is

looked upon as all in all ; in which want and are considered as evils arising solely from the defective human governments, and not as making part dispensations of God ; in which poverty is represented as merely a political evil, and the restraints which to keep the poor honest, are painted as the most grant injustice. The gospel *can* make no part system in which the absurd idea of perfectibility is considered as applicable to fallen creatures ; in the chimerical project of consummate earthly happiness (founded on the mad pretence of loving the better than God loves them) would defeat the plan, which meant this world for a scene of discipline and of remuneration. The gospel *can* have nothing to do with a system in which sin is reduced to a little man imperfection, and Old Bailey crimes are forced down into a few engaging weaknesses ; and in the turpitude of all the vices a man himself committed is done away by his *candour* in tolerating all the committed by others.*

But the part of the system the most fatal to the whom I am addressing is, that even in those which do not go all the length of treating marriage as an unjust infringement on liberty, and a tyrannical deduction from general happiness ; yet it commonly happens that the hero or heroine, who has practically violated the letter of the seventh commandment continues to live in the allowed violation of it. It is painted as so amiable and so benevolent, so tender or so brave ; and the temptation is represented *irresistible*, (for all these philosophers are fatalists) predominant and cherished sin is so filtered and catted of its pollutions, and is so sheltered and surrounded, and relieved with shining qualities, that the innocent and impressionable young reader is brought to lose all horror of the awful crime in question, and

* It is to be lamented that some, even of those more virtuous writers, who intend to espouse the cause of religion, should exhibit false views of it. I have lately seen a work of some merit in which was meritoriously designed to expose the impieties of the novelists. But the writer betrayed his own imperfect knowledge of Christianity he was defending, by making his hero, whom he represented as a *virtuous*, *fight a duel*!

omplacency she feels for the engaging virtues of the criminal.

There is another object to which I would direct the exertion of that power of female influence of which I am speaking. Those ladies who take the lead in society, are loudly called upon to act as the guardians of the public taste, as well as of the public virtue. They are called upon, therefore, to oppose with the whole weight of their influence, the irruption of those swarms of publications now daily issuing from the banks of the Danube, which, like their ravaging predecessors of the darker ages, though with far other and more fatal arms, are overrunning civilized society. Those readers, whose purer taste has been formed on the correct models of the old classic school, see with indignation and astonishment the Huns and Vandals once more overpowering the Greeks and Romans. They behold our minds, with a retrograde but rapid motion, hurried back to the reign of "chaos and old night," by distorted and unprincipled compositions, which, in spite of strong flashes of genius, unite the taste of the Goths with the morals of Bagshot ;*

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire !

These compositions terrify the weak, and amaze and enchant the idle ; while they disgust the discerning, by wild and mishapen superstitions, in which, with that *confistency* which forms so striking a feature of the new philosophy, those who most earnestly deny the immortality of the soul, are most eager to introduce the machinery of ghosts.

The writings of the French infidels were some years ago circulated in England with uncommon industry, and with some effect ; but the plain sense and good principles of the far greater part of our countrymen, resisted the attacks and rose superior to the trial. Of the doctrines and principles here alluded to, the dreadful consequences, not only in the unhappy country where they originated, and were almost universally

* The newspapers announce that Schiller's Tragedy of the Robbers, which inflamed the young nobility of Germany to enlist themselves into a band of highwaymen to rob in the forests of Benevala, is now acting in England by persons of quality !

adopted, but in every part of Europe where they have been received, have been such as to serve as a beacon to surrounding nations, if any warning can preserve them from destruction. In this country the subject is now so well understood, that every thing that issues from the *French* press is received with jealousy ; and work, on the first appearance of its exhibiting the doctrines of Voltaire and his associates, is rejected with indignation.

But let us not on account of this victory repose in confident security. The modern apostles of infidelity and immorality, little less indefatigable in dispersing their pernicious doctrines than the first apostles were in propagating gospel truths, have indeed changed the weapons, but they have by no means desisted from the attack. To destroy the principles of Christianity in this island, appears at the present moment to be the grand aim. Deprived of the assistance of the *French* press, they are now attempting to attain their object under the close and more artificial veil of German literature. Conscious that religion and morals will stand or fall together, their attacks are sometimes levelled against the one, and sometimes against the other. With strong occasional professions of general attachment to both of these, they endeavour to interest the feelings of the reader, sometimes in favour of some or particular vice, at other times on the subject of some one objection to revealed religion. Poetry as well as prose, romance as well as history, writings on philosophical as well as on political subjects, have thus been employed to instil the principles of *Illuminism*, while incredible pains have been taken to obtain able translations of every book which was supposed likely to be of use in corrupting the heart or misleading the understanding. In many of these translations, certain bolder passages, which, though well received in Germany would have excited disgust in England, are wholly omitted, in order that the mind may be more certainly though more slowly, prepared for the full effect of the same poison to be administered in a stronger degree another period.

: not those to whom these pages are addressed :
 ve themselves, by supposing this to be a fable ;
 et them inquire most seriously whether I speak
 , in asserting that the attacks of infidelity in Great
 in are at this moment principally directed against
 : male breast. Conscious of the influence of wo-
 n civil society, conscious of the effects which fe-
 infidelity produced in France, they attribute the
 xcess of their attempts in this country to their hav-
 een hitherto chiefly addressed to the male sex.
 are now sedulously labouring to destroy the re-
 s principles of women, and in too many instances
 fatally succeeded. For this purpose, not only
 s and romances have been made the vehicles of
 and infidelity, but the same allurements have been
 out to the women of our country, which was em-
 d by the first philosophers to the first sinner—
 wledge. Listen to the precepts of the new Ger-
 enlighteners, and you need no longer remain in
 situation in which Providence has placed you !
 w their examples, and you shall be permitted to
 ge in all those gratifications which custom, not
 ion, has tolerated in the male sex !

et us jealously watch every deepening shade in the
 ge of manners ; let us mark every step, however
 siderable, whose tendency is downwards. Cor-
 on is neither stationary nor retrograde ; and to
 departed from modesty, simplicity, and truth, is
 dy to have made a progress. It is not only aw-
 true, that since the new principles have been
 t, *women* have been too eagerly inquisitive after
 monstrous compositions ; but it is true also that,
 a new and offensive renunciation of their native
 acy, *many women of character* make little hesitation
 owing their familiarity with works abounding
 principles, sentiments, and descriptions, “ which
 ould not be so much as named among them.” By
 ring their minds to come in contact with such
 agious matter, they are irrecoverably tainting
 ; and by acknowledging that they are actually
 ersant with such corruptions, (with whatever

reprobation of the author they may qualify the sale of the book,) they are exciting in others a pernicious curiosity for the same unhallowed gratification. Thus they are daily diminishing in the bold and the timid those wholesome scruples, by which a tender conscience ceases to be intrenched, and the subsequent stages of ruin are gradually facilitated.

We have hitherto spoken only of the *German* ; but because there are multitudes who read, equal pains have been taken to promote the same object through the medium of the stage : the most powerful weapon is, of all others, that against which it is at the present moment, the most important to warn the inconsiderate of my countrywomen.

As a specimen of the German drama, it may be unseasonable to offer a few remarks on the play of the *Stranger*. In this piece the character of an *adulteress*, which, in all periods of the world, as well as modern, in all countries, heathen as christian, has hitherto been held in detestation, is never been introduced but to be reprobated, is at the first time presented to our view in the most attractive and fascinating colours. The heroine is a woman who has forsook a husband the most affectionate and amiable, and lived for some time in a criminal commerce with her seducer. Repenting at length of her crime, she buries herself in retirement. The efforts of the poet during the whole piece are exerted to tempt to render this woman the object not of the compassion and forgiveness, but of the esteem and affection of the audience. The injured husband, convinced of his wife's repentance, forms a resolution which every man of true feeling and christianity will probably approve. He forgives her and offers her through life his advice, protection and fortune, together with every thing which can alleviate the misery of her condition, but refuses to relinquish the situation of his wife. But this is not sufficient to the *German* author. His efforts are employed to excite is to be feared but too successfully, in making the audience consider the husband as an unrelenting persecutor while they are led by the art of the poet and

h to see an adulteress restored to that rank of woman who have not violated the most solemn covenant that can be made with man, nor disobeyed one of the strictest positive laws which has been enjoined by God.

About the same time that this first attempt at representing an adulteress in an exemplary light was made by a German dramatist, which forms an æra in manners, a direct vindication of adultery was, for the first time, attempted by a woman, a professed admirer and imitator of the German suicide Werter. *The Female Werter*, as she is styled by her biographer, asserts, in a work intitled, "The Wrongs of Women," that adultery is justifiable, and that the restrictions placed on it by the laws of England, constitute one of the *Wrongs of Women*.

This leads me to dwell a little longer on this most destructive class in the whole wide range of modern corruptors, who effect the most desperate work of the passions, without so much as pretending to urge their silence in extenuation of the guilt of indulging them. They solicit this very indulgence with a sort of cold-blooded speculation, and invite the reader to the most unbounded gratifications, with all the saturnine coolness of a geometrical calculation. Theirs is an iniquity rather of phlegm than of spirit; and in the pettish atmosphere they raise about them, as in the infernal climate described by Milton—

The parching air *

Burns froze, and frost performs th' effects of fire.

This cool, calculating, intellectual wickedness eats at the very heart and core of virtue, and like a deadly mildew blights and shrivels the blooming promise of the human spring. Its benumbing touch communicates a torpid sluggishness which paralyzes the soul. It descants on depravity as gravely, and details its gross acts as frigidly, as if its object were to *allay* the tumult of the passions, while it is letting them loose on mankind, by "plucking off the muzzle" of present restraint and future accountability. The system is a

* "When the north wind bloweth it devoureth the mountains, and burneth the wilderness, and consumeth the grass as fire." Ecclesi. i. 20.

dire confusion, compounded of bold impiety, br sensuality, and exquisite folly, which creeping fr about the heart, checks the moral circulation, and tally stops the pulse of goodness by the extinction the vital principle : thus not only choaking the st of actual virtue, but drying up the very founta future remorse and remote repentance.

The ravages which some of the old offenders ag purity made in the youthful heart, by the exercise fervid but licentious imagination on the passions, r bled the mischief effected by floods, cataraets, and canos. The desolation indeed was terrible, an ruin was tremendous : yet it was a ruin which di *infallibly* preclude the possibility of recovery. country, though deluged and devastated, was no terly put beyond the power of restoration. The vests indeed were destroyed, and all was wide ste But though the crops were lost, the *seeds* of veget were not absolutely eradicated ; so that, after a and barren blank fertility, *might* finally return.

But the heart once infected with this newly tated venom, subtil though sluggish in its oper resembles what travellers relate of that blasted sp dead sea, where those devoted cities once stood v for their pollutions were burnt with fire from he It continues a stagnant lake of putrifying waters. wholesome blade evermore shoots up ; the air tainted that no living thing subsists within its ence. Near the sulphureous pool the very pri of being is annihilated.—All is death,

Death, unrepeatable, eternal death !

But let us take comfort. These projects are yet generally realized. These atrocious principles not yet adopted into common practice. Though cations seem with a confluent tide to be pouring i on us from every quarter, yet there is still left a us a discriminating judgment. Clear and str marked distinctions between right and wrong still sist. While we continue to cherish this sanity of the case is not desperate. Though that crime growth of which always exhibits the most irrefra

of the dissoluteness of public manners ; though crime, which cuts up order and virtue by the roots, isolates the sanctity of vows, is awfully increasing,

'Till tenates seem,
For purposes of empire less conven'd
'Than to replete the adult'rels from her bonds ;

anks to the surviving efficacy of a holy religion, e operation of virtuous laws, and to the energy nshaken integrity with which these laws are *now* nistered ; and, most of all perhaps, to a standard orals which continues in force, when the princi- hich sanctioned it are no more ; this crime, in male sex at least, is still held in just abhorrence. e practised, it is not honourable ; if it be com- d, it is not justified ; we do not yet affect to pal- ts turpitude ; as yet it hides its abhorred head king privacy ; and reprobation *hitherto* follows its city.

at on YOUR exerting your influence with just appli- a and increasing energy, may, in no small degree, nd whether this corruption shall still continue to fisted. For the abhorrence of a practice will too bly diminish, of which the theory is perused with isiasm. From admiring to adopting, the step is , and the progress rapid ; and it is in the moral as e natural world ; the motion, in the case of minds ell as of bodies, is accelerated as they approach entre to which they are tending.

ye to whom this address is particularly directed ! wful charge is, in this instance, committed to your s ; as you discharge it or shrink from it, you pro- or injure the honour of your daughters and the iness of your sons, of both which you are the de- aries. And, while you resolutely persevere in ng a stand against the encroachments of this e, suffer not your firmness to be shaken by that

tion or friend, anxiously watch for the period when she shall be deserted by her betrayer ; and see if, by your Christian offices, she can be snatched from a perpetuity of vice. But if, through the Divine blessing on your patient endeavours, she should ever be awakened to remorse, be not anxious to restore the forlorn penitent to that society against whose laws she has so grievously offended ; and remember that her soliciting such a restoration, furnishes but too plain a proof that she is not the penitent your partiality would believe ; since penitence is more anxious to make its peace with Heaven than with the world. Joyfully would a truly contrite spirit commute an earthly for an everlasting reprobation ! To restore a criminal to public society, is perhaps to tempt her to repeat her crime, or to deaden her repentance for having committed it, as well as to insult and to injure that society ; while to restore a strayed soul to God will add lustre to your Christian character, and brighten your eternal crown.

In the meantime, there are other evils, ultimately perhaps tending to this, into which we are falling through that sort of fashionable candour, which, as was hinted above, is among the mischievous characteristics of the present day ; of which period perhaps it is not the smallest evil, that vices are made to look so like virtues, and are so assimilated to them, that it requires watchfulness and judgment sufficiently to analyze and discriminate. There are certain women of good fashion who practise irregularities not consistent with the strictness of virtue ; while their good sense and knowledge of the world make them at the same time keenly alive to the value of reputation. They want to retain their indulgences, without quite forfeiting their credit ; but finding their fame fast declining, they artfully cling, by flattery and marked attentions to a few persons of more than ordinary character ; and thus, till they are driven to let go their hold, continue to prop a falling frame.

On the other hand, there are not wanting women of distinction of very correct general conduct, and of no ordinary sense and virtue, who, confiding with an high mind on what they too confidently call *the in-*

of their own hearts; anxious to deserve a good name on the one hand, by a life free from reproach, yet very too desirous on the other of securing a worldly fashionable reputation; while their general associates are persons of honour, and their general resort of safety; yet allow themselves to be occasionally present at the midnight orgies of revelry and gaming-houses of no honorable estimation; and thus to keep up characters, which without their sustaining hand, would sink to their just level of contempt and probation. While they are holding out this to a drowning reputation, rather, it is to be feared, showing their own strength than assisting another's weakness, they value themselves, perhaps, on not partaking of the worst parts of the amusements which may be going on; but they sanction them by their presence, they lend their countenance to corruptions they abhor, and their example to the young and impressionable, who are looking about for some such pretext to justify them in that to which they were inclined, but were too timid to have ventured upon without the protection of such unsullied names. These respectable characters, without looking to the general consequences of their indiscretion, are uselessly employed in breaking down, as it were, the road fence which should ever separate two very different sorts of society, and are becoming a kind of moral link between vice and virtue.

There is a gross deception which even persons of high station practise on themselves. They loudly condemn vice and irregularity as an abstract principle; they stigmatize them in persons of an opposite character or in those from whom they themselves have no prospect of personal advantage or amusement, and in consequence therefore they have no particular interest to remove the evil. But the same disorders are viewed with horror when practised by those who in any way interfere with *their* pleasures. Refined entertainments, sumptuous decorations, select music, whatever furnishes a slight rare and exquisite to the senses, these soften the severity of criticism; these palliate sins, these cover over the flaws of a broken character, and extort

not pardon merely, but justification, countenance, intimacy ! The more respectable will not, perhaps, go all the length of vindicating the disreputable vice, but they affect to disbelieve its existence in the individual instance ; or, failing in this, they will bury its acknowledged turpitude in the seducing qualities of the agreeable delinquent. Talents of every kind are considered as a commutation for a few vices ; and such talents are made a passport to introduce into honorable society characters whom their profligacy ought to exclude from it.

But the great object to which you, who are or may be mothers, are more especially called, is the education of your children. If we are responsible for the use of influence in the case of those over whom we have no immediate control, in the case of our children we are responsible for the exercise of acknowledged power : a power wide in its extent, indefinite in its effects, and inestimable in its importance. On you depend in no small degree the principles of the whole rising generation. To your direction the daughters are almost exclusively committed ; and until a certain age, to you also is consigned the mighty privilege of forming the hearts and minds of your infant sons. To you is made over the awfully important trust of infusing the first principles of piety into the tender minds of those who may one day be called to instruct not families merely, but districts ; to influence, not individuals, but senates. Your private exertions may at this moment be contributing to the future happiness, your domestic neglect, to the future ruin, of your country. And may you never forget, in this your early instruction of your offspring, nor they, in their future application of it, that religion is the only sure ground of morals ; that private principle is the only solid basis of public virtue. O think that they both may be fixed or forfeited forever according to the use you are now making of that power which God has delegated to you, and of which he will demand a strict account. By his blessing on your pious labours may both sons and daughters hereafter "arise and call you blessed." And in the great day of general account, may every christian mother be

abled through divine grace to say, with humble confidence, to her Maker and Redeemer, "Behold the children whom thou hast given me!"

Christianity, driven out from the rest of the world, as still, blessed be God! a "strong hold" in this country. And though it be the special duty of the appointed "watchman, *now* that he seeth the sword come upon the land, to blow the trumpet and warn the people, which if he neglect to do, their blood shall be required of the watchman's hand:"* yet in this sacred garrison, *impregnable but by neglect*, you too have an awful post, that of arming the minds of the rising race with "the shield of faith, whereby they shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked;" that of "girding them with that sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Let that very period which is decreed in a neighbouring country, by a formal renunciation of religion, be solemnly marked by you to purposes diametrically opposite. Let that dishonoured era in which *they* avowed their resolution to exclude Christianity from the national education, be the precise moment seized upon by you for its more sedulous inculcation. And while *their* children are systematically trained to "live without God in the world," let *yours*, with a more decided emphasis, be consecrated to promote his glory in it!

If you neglect this your bounden duty, you will have effectually contributed to expel Christianity from her last citadel. And remember, that the dignity of the work to which you are called, is no less than that of "preserving the ark of the Lord."

* Ezekiel, xxxiii. 6.

CHAP. II.

On the education of women.—The prevailing system tends to establish the errors which it ought to correct.—Dangers arising from an excessive cultivation of the arts.

IT is far from being the object of this slight work to offer a regular plan of female education, a task which has been often more properly assumed by far abler writers; but it is intended rather to suggest a few remarks on the reigning mode, which, though it has had many panegyrists, appears to be defective, not only in certain particulars, but as a general system. There are indeed numberless honourable exceptions to an observation which will be thought severe; yet the author would ask whether it be not the natural tendency of the prevailing and popular mode to excite and promote those very evils which it ought to be the main end and object of Christian instruction to remove? Whether the reigning system does not tend to weaken the principles it ought to strengthen, and to dissolve the heart it should fortify? Whether instead of directing the grand and important engine of education to attack and destroy *vanity, selfishness, and inconsideration*, that triple alliance in strict and constant league against female virtue; the combined powers of instruction are not sedulously confederated in confirming their strength and establishing their empire?

If indeed the *material* substance; if the body and limbs, with the organs and senses, be really the more valuable objects of attention, then there is little room for animadversion and improvement; but if the immaterial and immortal mind; if the heart "out of which are the issues of life," be the main concern; if the great business of education be to implant right ideas, to communicate useful knowledge, to form a correct taste and a sound judgment, to resist evil propensities, and above all to seize the favorable season for infusing principles and confirming habits; if education be a school to fit us for life, and life be a school to fit us

or eternity ; if such, I repeat it, be the chief work and end of education, it may then be worth inquiring how far these ends are likely to be effected by the prevailing system.

Is it not a fundamental error to consider children as innocent beings, whose little weaknesses may perhaps want some correction, rather than as beings who bring into the world a corrupt nature and evil dispositions, which it should be the great end of education to rectify ? This appears to be such a foundation-uth, that if I were asked what quality is most important in an instructor of youth, I should not hesitate to reply, *such a strong impression of the corruption of our nature, should insure a disposition to counteract it ; together with a deep view and thorough knowledge of the human heart, should be necessary for developing and controlling its most secret and complicated workings.* And let us remember that to *know the world*, as it is called, that is, to know its local manners, temporary usages, and evanescent fashions, is not to *know human nature* : and that where this prime knowledge is wanting, those natural evils which ought to be counteracted will be fostered.

Vanity, for instance, is reckoned among the light and venial errors of youth ; nay, so far from being treated as a dangerous enemy, it is often called in as an auxiliary. At worst, it is considered as a harmless weakness, which subtracts little from the value of a character ; as a natural effervescence, which will subside of itself, when the first ferment of the youthful passions shall have done working. But those persons know little of the conformation of the human and especially of the female heart, who fancy that vanity is ever exhausted by the mere operation of time and events. Let those who maintain this opinion look into our places of public resort, and there behold if the ghost of departed beauty is not to its last flitting, fond of haunting the scenes of its past pleasures. The soul, unwilling if I may borrow an allusion from the Platonic mythology to quit the spot in which the body enjoyed its former delights, still continues to hover about the same place, though the same pleasures are no longer to be found there. Disappointments indeed may divert van-

ity into a new direction ; prudence may prevent from breaking out into excesses, and age may prevent that it is " vexation of spirit ;" but neither disfigurement, prudence, nor age can *cure* it ; for they correct the principle. Nay, the very disfigurement itself serves as a painful evidence of its protraction.

Since then there is a season when the youth cease to be young, and the beautiful to excite admiration to learn how to grow old gracefully is perhaps the rarest and most valuable art which can be taught to woman. And it must be confessed it is a severe trial for those women to be called to lay aside beauty, who have nothing else to take up. In this sober season of life that education should draw its rich resources. However disregarded till hitherto have been, they will be wanted now. Admirers fall away, and flatterers become men of mind will be driven to retire into itself, and if no entertainment at home, it will be driven back upon the world with increased force. Yet for this, do we not seem to educate our daughters, solely, for the transient period of youth, when in maturer life we ought to advert ? Do we not teach them for a crowd, forgetting that they are to be at home ? for the world, and not for themselves to show, and not for use ? for time, and not for eternity.

Vanity (and the same may be said of selfishness) not to be resisted like any other vice, which is sometimes busy and sometimes quiet ; it is not to be cured as a single fault, which is indulged in opposition to a single virtue ; but it is uniformly to be controlled by all the Christian graces ; which not only combats itself with all our faults, but insinuates itself into our virtues too ; and will, if not checked effectually, rob our best actions of their reward. Vanity, if we use the analogy, is, with respect to the other senses, what feeling is in regard to the other senses ; confined in its operation to the eye, or the ear, or a single organ, but is diffused through the whole

in every part, awakened and communicated by lightest touch.

At a few of the evils of the present day arise from wrong and perverted application of terms; among which, perhaps there is not one more abused, misunderstood, or misapplied, than the term *accomplishments*. The word in its original meaning signifies *completeness, perfection*. - But I may safely appeal to the observation of mankind, whether they do not meet with swarms of such females, issuing from our boarding schools, all as emerging from the more private scenes of domestic education, who are introduced into the world, under the broad and universal title of *accomplished young ladies*, of all of whom it cannot very truly and correctly be pronounced, that they illustrate the definition, *completeness which leaves nothing to be added, and a perfection which leaves nothing to be desired*.

This phrenzy of accomplishments, unhappily is no longer restricted within the usual limits of rank and fortune; the middle orders have caught the contagion, and it rages downward with increasing and destructive violence, from the elegantly dressed, but slenderly educated curate's daughter, to the equally fashionable sister of the little tradesman, and of the more industrious, but not more judicious farmer. And is it not true, that as far as this epidemical mania has spread, every valuable part of society is declining in usefulness, as it rises in its ill-founded pretensions to elevation? till this rapid revolution of the manners of the middle class has so far altered the character of the nation as to be in danger of rendering obsolete the heretofore common saying, "that most worth and virtue are to be found in the middle station." For I do not scruple to assert, that in general, as far as my little observation has extended, this class of females, in what respects both to religious knowledge and to practical industry, falls short both of the very high and the very

Their new course of education, and the indolence of life and elegance of dress connected with it, peculiarly unfits them for the active duties of their

own very important condition ; while, with eagerness, and second-hand opportunities, they snatch a few of those showy acquirements which decorate the great. This is done apparently with the other of these views ; either to make their way by marriage, or if that fail, to qualify them to be teachers of others : hence the abundant multitude of superficial wives, and of incompetent and ignorant governesses. The use of the pencil, the performance of exquisite but unnecessary works, the study of languages and of music, require (with some exceptions which should always be made in favor of great genius) a degree of leisure which belongs exclusively to affluence.* One use of learning languages is that we may know what the terms which express the articles of our dress and our table are called in French or Italian ; nor that we may think over a few phrases in English, and then translate them, to show one foreign idiom ; for he who cannot *think* in a language cannot be said to understand it : but the use of acquiring any foreign language is, either that it enables us occasionally to converse with foreigners acquainted with any other, or that it is a key to the literature of the country to which it belongs. No humbler females, the chief part of whose time is required for domestic offices, are little likely to find any way of foreigners ; and so far from enjoying opportunities for the acquisition of foreign literature, they have seldom time to possess themselves of much valuable knowledge which the books of their own country so abundantly furnish ; and the acquisition of a foreign tongue would be so much more useful and honourable, if the paltry accessions they make, by hammering out the meaning of a few passages in a tongue they but imperfectly understand, and of which they are never able to make any use.

It would be well if the reflection how eager they are for the redundancy of accomplishments is seized on by

* Those among the class in question, whose own good sense prompts them to avoid these mistaken pursuits, cannot be offended at the remarks which does not belong to them.

were to operate as in the case of other absurd
s; the rich and the great being seldom brought to
see any mode or custom, from the mere consid-
eration that it is preposterous, or that it is wrong ;
they are frightened into its immediate relinquish-
ment from the pressing consideration that the *vulgar*
beginning to adopt it.

to return to that more elevated, and, on account
of more extended influence only, that more im-
portant class of females, to whose use this little work
is immediately dedicated. Some popular authors
on the subject of female instruction, had for a time
prescribed a fantastic code of artificial manners. They
transformed elegance into insipidity, frittered down deli-
cacy into frivolousness, and reduced manners into *min-*

“But to lisp, and to amble, and to nick-name
creatures,” has nothing to do with true gentleness
and ; and to be silly makes no necessary part of
it. Another class of cotemporary authors turn-
the force of their talents to excite *emotions*, to in-
terest, and to reduce all mental and moral ex-
ercise into *sympathy* and *feeling*. These softer quali-
ties are elevated at the expence of principle ; and

women were incessantly hearing unqualified
sensibility extolled as the perfection of their nature ;
those who really possessed this amiable quality, in-
stead of directing, and chastising, and restraining it,
in danger of fostering it to their hurt, and began
to consider themselves as deriving their excellence from
sensibility ; while those less interesting damsels, who
could not find any of this amiable sensibility in
the *heart*, but thought it credible to have it some-
where, fancied its seat was in the *nerves* ; and here
it was easily found or feigned ; till a false and
excessive display of feeling became so predominant as
to bring in question the actual existence of that true-
ness, without which, though a woman may be
sensible, she can never be amiable.

At length then, by one of her sudden and rapid turns,
suddenly struck out both real sensibility and the
notion of it from the standing list of female per-
fections ; and, by a quick touch of her magic wand,

shifted the scene, and at once produced the independent beauty, the intrepid female, the huntress, and the archer; the swinging and confident address, the regimental, and the fourish. Such self-complacent heroines made us ready to their softer predecessors, who had aimed only at *winning* the other sex, while these aspiring fair ones gled for the bolder renown of *rivalling* the project failed; for, whereas the former had *inspired* admiration, the latter challenged, seized, compared the men, as was natural, continued to promote modest claimant to the sturdy competitor.

It would be well if we, who have the advantage of contemplating the errors of the two extremes, look for truth where she is commonly to be found, the plain and obvious middle path, equally remote from each excess; and, while we bear in mind that softness is not delicacy, let us also remember that refined manners do not necessarily include strength of character, nor vigor of intellect. Should we neglect also, that we are neither to train up Amazons or Circassians, but that it is our business to form rational beings? that we have to educate not only rational and accountable beings? and remembering this, we not be solicitous to let our daughters learn to be well-taught, and associate with the well-bred? In educating them, should we not carefully cultivate and implant religion, and cherish modesty? There is ever engaging in manners would be the natural result of whatever is just in sentiment, and consistent in principle; softness would grow out of humility, external delicacy would spring from purity of heart. Then the decorums, the proprieties, the elegance, and even the graces, as far as they are simple and honest, would follow as an almost inevitable sequence; for to follow in the train of Christian virtues, and not to take the lead of them, is the place which religion assigns to the graces.

Whether we have made the best use of the example of our predecessors, and of our own numberless advantages, and whether the prevailing system be re-

it with sound policy, true taste, or Christian principle, it may be worth our while to inquire.

Could not a stranger be led to imagine by a view of the reigning mode of female education, that human life consisted of one universal holiday, and that the grand contest between the several competitors was, who should be most eminently qualified to excel, and carry off the prize, in the various shows and games which were intended to be exhibited in it? And to the exponents themselves, would he not be ready to apply Francis Bacon's observation on the Olympian victors, that they were so excellent in these unnecessary games, that their perfection must needs have been achieved by the neglect of whatever was necessary?

What would the polished Addison, who thought the one great end of a lady's learning to dance was she might know how to sit still gracefully; what would even the Pagan historian * of the great Roman general, who could commemorate it among the deeds of his hero's *accomplished* mistress, "that she was too good a singer and dancer for a virtuous woman"—what would these refined critics have said, had they done as we have done, to see the art of dancing lifted up to such importance, that it cannot with any degree of safety be confided to one instructor; but a whole series of successive masters are considered as absolutely essential to its perfection? What would these accurate judges of female manners have said, to see a modest young lady first delivered into the hands of a military captain to instruct her in the *feminine* art of marching? When this delicate acquisition is attained, to see her transferred to a professor, who is to teach her the high steps; which professor, having communicated an indispensable portion of this indispensable art, leaves way for the professor of French dances; and all these, in their turn, either yield to, or have the honour to co-operate with, a finishing master; each probably receiving a stipend which would make the pious tutor or the learned chaplain rich and happy?

* Sallust.

not pardon merely, but justification, countenancing ! The more respectable will not, perhaps all the length of vindicating the disreputable vice they affect to disbelieve its existence in the instance ; or, failing in this, they will bury its acknowledged turpitude in the seducing qualities of the able delinquent. Talents of every kind are confessed as a commutation for a few vices ; and such are made a passport to introduce into honorable characters whom their profligacy ought to exclude from it.

But the great object to which you, who are our mothers, are more especially called, is the education of your children. If we are responsible for the influence in the case of those over whom we have immediate control, in the case of our children we are responsible for the exercise of acknowledged power wide in its extent, indefinite in its effect, inestimable in its importance. On you depend in a small degree the principles of the whole rising generation. To your direction the daughters are almost exclusively committed ; and until a certain age, it is also assigned the mighty privilege of forming the hearts and minds of your infant sons. To you is over the awfully important trust of infusing the principles of piety into the tender minds of those who may one day be called to instruct not families or churches but districts ; to influence, not individuals, but societies. Your private exertions may at this moment be contributing to the future happiness, your domestic neglect to the future ruin, of your country. And may I never forget, in this your early instruction of your young, nor they, in their future application of it, that religion is the only sure ground of morals ; that private piety is the only solid basis of public virtue. O think that they both may be fixed or forfeited forever according to the use you are now making of the power which God has delegated to you, and of which he will demand a strict account. By his blessing your pious labours may both sons and daughters after "arise and call you blessed." And in the day of general account, may every christian mother

enabled through divine grace to say, with humble confidence, to her Maker and Redeemer, "Behold the children whom thou hast given me !"

Christianity, driven out from the rest of the world, has still, blessed be God ! a "strong hold" in this country. And though it be the special duty of the appointed "watchman, *now* that he seeth the sword come up on the land, to blow the trumpet and warn the people, which if he neglect to do, their blood shall be required of the watchman's hand :"^{*} yet in this sacred garrison, *impregnable but by neglect*, you too have an awful post, that of arming the minds of the rising race with "the shield of faith, whereby they shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked ;" that of "girding them with that sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Let that very period which is defaced in a neighbouring country, by a formal renunciation of religion, be solemnly marked by you to purposes diametrically opposite. Let that dishonoured æra in which *they* avowed their resolution to exclude Christianity from the national education, be the precise moment seized upon by you for its more sedulous inculcation. And while *their* children are systematically trained to "live without God in the world," let *yours*, with a more decided emphasis, be consecrated to promote his glory in it !

If you neglect this your bounden duty, you will have effectually contributed to expel Christianity from her last citadel. And remember, that the dignity of the work to which you are called, is no less than that of "preserving the ark of the Lord."

^{*} Ezekiel, xxxiii. 6.

ever be observed, that the modesty of the Roman, and the chaste demeanor of her virgin d which amidst the stern virtues of the state we maculate and pure as the honour of the Roman fell a sacrifice to the luxurious dissipation by their Asiatic conquests; after which they were soon taught a complete change of c They were instructed to accommodate their pleasing to the more vitiated tastes of the ot and began to study every grace and every might captivate the exhausted hearts, and e wearied and capricious inclinations of the r by a rapid and at length complete enervation, a man character lost its signature, and through succession of slavery, effeminacy, and vice, i that degeneracy of which some of the moder states serve to furnish a too just specimen.

It is of the essence of human things that objects which are highly useful in their season, and degree, become mischievous in their other periods and under other circumstances. In the state of barbarism, the arts are among the best ers; and they go on to be improved themselves, improving those who cultivate them, till, having ed a certain point, those very arts which were the basis of civilization and refinement, be

ing new and pernicious modes of artificial gratification.

May we not rank among the present corrupt consequences of this unbounded cultivation, the unchaste dress, the impure style of dress, and that indelicate female-like exhibition of the female figure, which by its ill disposed folds, its seemingly wet and adhesive drape, so defines the form as to prevent covering it from becoming a veil? This licentious mode, as acute Montesquieu observed on the dances of the Italian virgins, has taught us "to strip chastity itself of modesty."

May the author be allowed to address to our own country and our own circumstances, to both of which seem peculiarly applicable, the spirit of that beautiful apostrophe of the most polished poet of antiquity to the most victorious nation? "Let us leave the inhabitants of *conquered countries* the praise of carrying the very highest degree of perfection, sculpture and the sister arts; but let *this* country direct her own exertions to the art of governing mankind in equity and peace, of shewing mercy to the submissive, and of abasing the proud among surrounding nations." *

Let me not be suspected of bringing into any sort of comparison the gentleness of British Government with the rapacity of Roman conquests, or the tyrannical principles of Roman dominion. To spoil, to butcher, and to commit every kind of violence, they call, says one of the ablest of their historians, by the lying name of *government*, and as they have spread a general desolation, they call it *peace* (1.) With such *dictatorial*, or as we might now read, *directorial* inquisition we can have no point of contact; and if I have applied the flattery of a delightful poet to the purpose of English happiness, it is only to shew wherein true national grandeur consists. and that a country pays too dear a price for those arts and embellishments of which endanger the loss of its morals and manners.

) Tacitus' Life of Agricola, speech of Calpurnius to his soldiers

CHAP. III.

External Improvement.—Children's Balls.—French Governesses.

LET me not however be misunderstood. The customs which fashion has established, when they are not in opposition to what is right, when they are not hostile to virtue, should unquestionably be pursued in the education of ladies. Piety maintains no natural war with elegance, and Christianity would be no gainer by making her disciples unamiable. Religion does not forbid that the exterior be made to a certain degree the object of attention—but the admiration bestowed, the sums expended, and the time lavished on arts, which add little to the intrinsic value of life, which have limitations. While these arts should be admired, let them not be admired above their just value ; while they are practised, let it not be to the exclusion of higher employments ; while they are cultivated, let it be to amuse leisure, not to engross life.

But it happens unfortunately, that to ordinary observers, the girl who is really receiving the worst instruction often makes the best figure ; while in the more correct but less ostensible education, the deep and sure foundations to which the edifice will owe its strength and stability lie out of sight. The outward accomplishments have the dangerous advantage of addressing themselves more immediately to the senses, and of course meet everywhere with those who can in some measure appreciate as well as admire them ; for all can see and hear, but all cannot scrutinize and discriminate. External acquirements too recommend themselves the more because they are more rapidly, as well as more visibly progressive ; while the mind is led on to improvement by slow motions and imperceptible degrees ; while the heart must now be admonished by reproof, and now allured by kindness ; its liveliest advances being suddenly impeded by obstinacy, and its brightest prospects often obscured by passion ; it is slow in its acquisitions of virtue, and reluctant in its

approaches to piety ; and its progress, when any progress is made, does not obtrude itself to vulgar observation. The unruly and turbulent propensities of the mind are not so obedient to the forming hand as defects of manner or awkwardness of gait. Often when we fancy that a troublesome passion is completely crushed, we have the mortification to find that we have "scotch'd the snake, not killed it." One evil temper starts up before another is conquered. The subduing hand cannot cut off the ever-sprouting heads so fast as the prolific Hydra can re-produce them, nor fell the stubborn Antæus so often as he can recruit his strength, and rise in vigorous and repeated opposition.

Hired teachers are also under a disadvantage resembling tenants at rack-rent ; it is their interest to bring in an immediate revenue of praise and profit, and, for the sake of a present rich crop, those who are not strictly conscientious, do not care how much the ground is impoverished for future produce. But parents, who are the lords of the soil, must look to permanent value, and to continued fruitfulness. The best effects of a careful education are often very remote ; they are to be discovered in future scenes, and exhibited in as yet untried connexions. Every event of life will be putting the heart into fresh situations, and making new demands on its prudence, its firmness, its integrity, or its forbearance. Those whose business it is to form and model it, cannot foresee those contingent situations specifically and distinctly ; yet, as far as human wisdom will allow, they must enable it to prepare for them all by general principles, correct habits, and an unremitted sense of dependence on the Great Disposer of events. As the soldier must learn and practise all his evolutions, though he do not know on service his leader may command him, by what particular foe he shall be most assailed, or what mode of attack the enemy may employ ; so must the young Christian militant be prepared by previous discipline for actual duty.

But the contrary of all this is the case with external acquisitions. The master, (it is his interest,) will industriously instruct his young pupil to set all her improvements in the most immediate and conspicuous

point of view. To attract admiration is the great principle sedulously inculcated into her young heart; considered as the fundamental maxim; and, as if we were required to condense the reigning principle of the brilliant education of a lady into an aphorism, might be comprised in this short sentence, *To attract admiration*. This system however is the fruitful germ from which a thousand yet unborn vanities, with a multiplied ramifications, will spring. A tender mother cannot but feel an honest triumph in contemplating those talents in her daughter which will necessarily excite admiration; but she will also shudder at the thought that admiration may excite, and at the new passions which will awaken: and, startling as it may sound, the mother of a wise mother, anxious for her daughter's best interests, will seem to be at variance with all her teachers. She will indeed rejoice in her progress, but she will rejoice with trembling; and she is fully aware that if all possible accomplishments could be bought at the price of a single virtue, or a single principle, the purchase would be infinitely too dear, and she would reject the dazzling but destructive acquisition. She knows that the superstructure of accomplishments can be alone safely erected on the firm and solid basis of Christian humility: nay more, the materials of which that superstructure is to be composed, are in themselves of so unstable and tottering nature, the foundation must be deepened and enlarged with more abundant care, otherwise the fabric overloaded with its own ornaments, and what is intended only to embellish the building, will prove the occasion of its fall.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven," said the wise man; but he said it before the invention of BABY-RATTLE, an invention which has formed a kind of æra, the most inauspicious one in the annals of polished education. This modern device is a sort of triple cockade against the innocence, the health, and happiness of children. Thus, by factitious amusements, and by the loss of a relish for the simple joys, the unbought pleasures, which naturally belong to their blooming

son, is like blotting out spring from the year. To sacrifice the true and proper enjoyments of sprightly and happy children, is to make them pay a dear and disproportionate price for their artificial pleasures. They step at once from the nursery to the ball-room; and, by a change of habits as new as it is preposterous, are thinking of dressing themselves, at an age when they used to be dressing their dolls. Instead of bounding with the unrestrained freedom of little wood-symphs over hill and dale, their cheeks flushed with health, and their hearts overflowing with happiness, these gay little creatures are shut up all the morning, demurely practising the *pas grave*, and transacting the serious business of acquiring a new step for the evening with more cost of time and pains than it would have taken them to acquire twenty ideas.

Thus they lose the amusements which properly belong to their smiling period, and unnaturally anticipate those pleasures (such as they are) which would come in, too much of course, on their introduction into fashionable life. The true pleasures of childhood are cheap and natural; for every object teems with delight to eyes and hearts new to the enjoyment of life; nay, the hearts of healthy children abound with a general disposition to mirth and joyfulness, even without a specific object to excite it; like our first parent, in the world's first spring, when all was new, and fresh, and gay about him,

They live and move,
And feel that they are happier than they know.

Only furnish them with a few simple and harmless materials, and a little, but not too much, leisure, and they will manufacture their own pleasures with more skill, and success, and satisfaction, than they will receive from all that your money can purchase. Their bodily recreations should be such as will promote their health, quicken their activity, enliven their spirits, whet their ingenuity, and qualify them for their mental work. But, if you begin thus early to create wants, to invent gratifications, to multiply desires, to waken dormant sensibilities, to stir up hidden fires, you are studiously laying up for your children a store

of premature caprice and irritability, of impatience and discontent.

While childhood preserves its native simplicity, every little change is interesting, every gratification is luxury. A ride or a walk, a garland of flowers of her own forming, a plant of her own cultivating, will be delightful amusement to a child in her natural state but these harmless and interesting recreations will be dull and tasteless to a sophisticated little creature, nursed in such forced, and costly, and vapid pleasure. Alas ! that we should throw away this first grand opportunity of working into a practical habit the moiety of this important truth, that the chief source of human discontent is to be looked for, not in our real but in our fictitious wants ; not in the demands of nature but in the insatiable cravings of artificial desire !

When we see the growing zeal to crowd the midnight bairn with these pretty fairies, we should be almost tempted to fancy it was a kind of pious emulation among the mothers to cure their infants of a fondness for vain and foolish pleasures, by tiring them out with this premature familiarity with them. And we should be so desirous to invent an excuse for a practice so inexcusable, that we should be ready to hope that they were actuated by something of the same principle which led the Spartans to introduce their sons to scenes of war, not that they might conceive an early disgust at victory or possibly, that they imitated those Scythian mothers who used to plunge their new born infants into a flood, thinking none to be worth saving who could not stand this early struggle for their lives : the greater part, indeed as might have been expected, perished but the parents took comfort, that if many were killed the few who escaped would be the stronger for having been thus exposed !

To behold Lilliputian coquettes, projecting dress studying colours, assorting ribbands, mixing flowers and choosing feathers ; their little hearts bearing wishes about partners, and fears about rivals ; to see their fresh cheeks pale after the midnight supper, their aching heads and unbraced nerves, disqualifying the languid beings from the next day's task ; and to h

rave apology, "that it is owing to the wine, the wd, the heated room of the last night's ball ;" all I say, would really be as ludicrous, if the mis- of the thing did not take off from the merriment as any of the ridiculous and preposterous dispro- ns in the diverting travels of Captain Lemuel ver.

ider a just impression of the evils which we are ning from the principles and the practices of *mod- rance*, we are apt to lose sight of those deep and g mischiefs which so long, so regularly, and so sys- ically we have been importing from the same ry, though in another form and under another nment. In one respect, indeed, the first were ore formidable, because we embraced the ruin out suspecting it ; while we defeat the malignity e latter, by detecting the turpitude and defending lves against its contagion. This is not the place icant on that levity of manners, that contempt of abboth, that fatal familiarity with loose principles, hose relaxed notions of conjugal fidelity, which often been transplanted into this country by wom- fashion, as a too common effect of a long resi- e in a neighboring nation ; but it is peculiarly ole to my subject to advert to another domestic ief derived from the same foreign extraction : I t, the risks that have been run, and the sacrifices h have been made in order to furnish our young s with the means of acquiring the French language e greatest possible purity. Perfection in this ac- olishment has been so long established as the su- e object ; so long considered as the predominant lence to which all other excellencies must bow t, that it would be hopeless to attack a law which on has immutably decreed, and which has received amp of long prescription. We must, therefore, ntended with expressing a wish that this indispen- perfection could have been attained at the ex- e of sacrifices less important. It is with the great- ret I animadvert on this and some other prevail- practices, as they are errors into which the wise e respectable have, through want of consideration,

or rather through want of firmness to resist the tyranny of fashion, sometimes failen. It has not been usual when mothers of rank and reputation have asked how they ventured to entrust their daughter foreigners, of whose principles they knew nothing except that they were Roman Catholics, to and "That they had taken care to be secure on that subject ; for that it had been stipulated that the *"tion of religion should never be agitated between the teacher and the pupil."* This, it must be confessed, is a desperate remedy ; it is like starving to death to being poisoned. And who can help trembling for the event of that education, from which religion, as far as the governess is concerned, is thus formally and systematically excluded ! Surely it would not be requiring too much, to suggest at least that an attention less scrupulous should be exerted to insure the character of our children's instructor, for piety and knowledge, than is thought necessary to ascertain that has nothing *patois* in her dialect.

I would rate a correct pronunciation, and an elegant phraseology at their just price, and I would not value them low ; but I would not offer up piety and principles as victims to sounds and accents. And the matter is now made more easy ; for whatever disgrace it may once have brought on an English lady to have had imputed from her accent that she had the misfortune to be born in a neighboring country ; some recent events may serve to reconcile her to the suspicion of having been bred in her own. A country, to which (with its sins, which are many !) the whole world is looking up with envy and admiration as the seat of truth and of comparative happiness ! A country in which the exile, driven out by the crimes of his own, finds home ! A country, to obtain the protection of which it was claim enough to be unfortunate ; and no imminent to have been the subject of her direct foe country, which, in this respect, humbly imitating the Father of compassion, when it offered mercy to a pliant enemy, never conditioned for merit, nor insisted on the virtues of the miserable as a preliminary to its own bounty !

England ! with all thy faults I love thee still !

CHAP. IV.

Comparison of the Mode of Female Education in the last Age with the Present.

TO return, however to the subject of general education. We admit that a young lady may excel in speaking French and Italian, may repeat a few passages from a volume of extracts ; play like a professor, and sing like a syren ; have her dressing-room decorated with her own drawings, tables, stands, flower-pots, screens, and cabinets ; nay, she may dance like Sempronius * herself, and yet we shall insist that she may have been very badly educated. I am far from meaning to set no value whatever on any or all of these qualifications ; they are all of them elegant, and many of them properly tend to the perfecting of a polite education. These things in their measure and degree may be done, but there are others which should not be left undone. Many things are becoming, but "one thing is needful." Besides, as the world seems to be fully apprized of the value of whatever tends to embellish life, there is less occasion here to insist on its importance.

But, though a well-bred young lady may lawfully learn most of the fashionable arts ; yet, let me ask, does it seem to be the true end of education to make women of fashion *dancers, singers, players, painters, actresses, sculptors, gilders, varnishers, engravers, and embroiderers* ? Most *men* are commonly destined to some profession, and their minds are consequently turned each to its respective object. Would it not be strange if they were called out to exercise their profession, or to set up their trade, with only a little general knowledge of the trades and professions of all other men, without any previous definite application to their own peculiar calling ? The profession of ladies, to which the bent of *their* instruction should be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and mistresses of families. They should be therefore trained with a view to these several

* See Cataline's Conspiracy.

conditions, and be furnished with a stock of ideas, an principles, and qualifications, and habits, ready to be applied and appropriated, as occasion may demand, to each of these respective situations. For though the arts which merely embellish life must claim admiration; yet, when a man of sense comes to marry, it is a companion whom he wants, and not an artist. It is not merely a creature who can paint, and play, and sing, and draw, and dress, and dance; it is a being who can comfort and counsel him; one who can reason and reflect, and feel, and judge, and discourse, and discriminate; one who can assist him in his affairs, lighten his cares, soothe his sorrows, purify his joys, strengthen his principles, and educate his children.

Almost any ornamental acquirement is a good thing, when it is not the best thing a woman has, and talents are admirable when not made to stand proxy for virtues. The writer of these pages is intimately acquainted with several ladies, who excelling most of their sex in the art of music, but excelling them also in prudence and piety, find little leisure or temptation amid the delights and duties of a large and lovely family, for the exercise of this charming talent; they regret that so much of their own youth was wasted in acquiring an art which can be turned to so little account in married life, and are now conscientiously restricting their daughters in the portion of time allotted to its acquisition.

Far be it from me to discourage the cultivation of any existing talent; but may it not be questioned of the fond believing mother, whether talents, like the spirits of Owen Glendower, though conjured by parental partiality with ever so loud a voice,

Yet will they come when you do call for them?

That injudicious practice, therefore, cannot be too much discouraged, of endeavouring to create talents which do not exist in nature. *That their daughters shall learn every thing*, is so general a maternal maxim, that even unborn daughters, of whose expected abilities and conjectured faculties, it is presumed, no very accurate judgment can previously be formed, are yet

predestined to this universality of accomplishments. This comprehensive maxim, thus almost universally brought into practice, at once weakens the general powers of the mind, by drawing off its strength into too great a variety of directions ; and cuts up time into too many separate portions, by splitting it into such an endless multiplicity of employments. I know that I am treading on tender ground ; but I cannot help thinking that the restless pains we take to cram up every little vacuity of life, by crowding one new thing upon another, rather creates a thirst for novelty than knowledge ; and is but a well-disguised contrivance to anticipate the keeping us in after-life more effectually from conversing with ourselves. The care taken to prevent *ennui* is but a creditable plan for promoting self-ignorance. We run from one occupation to another, (I speak of those arts to which little intellect is applied,) with a view to lighten the pressure of time ; above all we fly to them to save us from our own thoughts ; we fly to them to rescue us from ourselves ; whereas were we thrown a little more on our own hands, we might at last be driven, by way of something to do, to try to get acquainted with our own hearts. But it is only one part of the general inconsistency of the human character, that with the person of all others we best love, we least like to converse, and to form an intimacy ; I mean ourselves. But though our being less absorbed by this busy trifling, which dignifies its inanity with the imposing name of occupation, might render us somewhat more sensible of the tedium of life ; yet might not this very sensation tend to quicken our pursuit of a better ? For an awful thought here suggests itself. If life be so long that we are driven to set at work every engine to pass away the tediousness of time ; how shall we do to get rid of the tediousness of eternity ? an eternity in which not one of the acquisitions which life has been exhausted in acquiring, will be of the least use ? Let not then the soul be starved by feeding it on such unsubstantial aliment, for the mind can be no more nourished by these empty husks than the body can be fed with ideas and principles.

Among the boasted improvements of the present age, none affords more frequent matter of peculiar exultation, than the manifest superiority in the employments of the young ladies of our time over those of the good housewives of the last century. It is matter of general triumph that they are at present employed in learning the polite arts, or in acquiring liberal accomplishments; while it is insisted that their forlorn predecessors wore out their joyless days in adorning the mansion-house with hideous hangings of sorrowful tapestry and disfiguring tent-stitch. Most cheerfully do I allow to the reigning modes their just claim of boasted superiority, for certainly there is no piety in bad taste. Still, granting all the deformity of the exploded ornaments, one advantage attended them: the walls and floors were not vain of their decorations; and it is to be feared, that the little person sometimes is. The flattery bestowed on the obsolete employments, for probably even *they* had their flatterers, furnished less aliment to selfishness, and less gratification to vanity; and the occupation itself was less likely to impair the delicacy and modesty of the sex, than the exquisite cultivation of personal accomplishments or personal decorations; and every mode which keeps down vanity and keeps back *self*, has at least a moral use. For while we admire the rapid movement of the elegant fingers of a young lady busied in working or painting her ball dress, we cannot help suspecting that her alacrity may be a little stimulated by the animating idea *how very well she shall look in it*. Nor was the industrious matron of Ithaca more soothed at her solitary loom with the sweet reflection that by her labour she was gratifying her filial and conjugal feelings, than the industrious but pleasure-loving damsel of Britain is gratified by the anticipated admiration which her ingenuity is procuring for her beauty.

Might not this propensity be a little checked, and an interesting feeling be combined with her industry, were the fair artist habituated to exercise her skill in adorning some one else rather than herself? For it will add no lightness to the lightest head, nor vanity to the vainest heart, to solace her labours in reflecting how

dingly the gown she is working will become her
 er. This suggestion, trifling as it may seem, of
 ating young ladies to exercise their taste, and de-
 heir leisure, not to the decoration of their own
 as, but to the service of those to whom they are
 l by every tender tie of love and duty, would not
 help to repress vanity, but by thus associating the
 of industry with that of filial tenderness, would
 te, while it gratified some of the best affections
 : heart. The Romans (and it is mortifying on the
 t of Christian education to be driven so often to
 to the superiority of Pagans) were so well aware
 : importance of keeping up a sense of family
 es and attachment by the very same means
 : promoted simple and domestic employment,
 no citizen of note ever appeared in public in any
 but what was spun by his wife and daughter :
 his virtuous fashion was not confined to the early
 of republican severity, but even in all the pomp
 xury of imperial power, Augustus preserved in
 vn family this simplicity of primitive manners.
 : me be allowed to repeat, that I mean not with
 sterous praise to descant on the ignorance or the
 lices of past times, nor absurdly to regret that
 r system of education which rounded the little
 of female acquirements within the limits of the
 er and the receipt-book. Yet if a preference al-
 exclusive was then given to what was merely use-
 preference almost equally exclusive also is now
 ed to what is merely ornamental. And it must
 ned, that if the life of a young lady, formerly, too
 resembled the life of a confectioner, it now too
 resembles that of an actress ; the morning is all
 rsal, and the evening is all performance. And
 who are trained in this regular routine, who are
 eted in order to be exhibited, soon learn to feel a
 f impatience in those societies in which *their* kind
 ents are not likely to be brought into play ; the
 f an auditor becomes dull to her who has been
 :o be a performer. Esteem and kindness become
 old substitutes to one who has been fed on
 its and pampered with acclamations : and the

excessive commendation which the visitor is expected to pay for his entertainment, not only keeps alive the flame of vanity in the artist by constant fuel, but is not seldom exacted at a price which a veracity at all strict, would grudge. The misfortune is, when a whole circle are obliged to be competitors who shall flatter most, it is not easy to be at once very sincere and very civil. And unfortunately, while the age is become so knowing and so fastidious, that if a young lady does not play like a public performer, no one thinks her worth attending to ; yet if she does so excel, some of the soberest of the admiring circle feel a strong alloy to their pleasure, on reflecting at what a vast expence of time this perfection must probably have been acquired.*

The study of the fine arts, indeed, is forced on young persons, with or without genius, (fashion as was said before, having swallowed up that distinction) to such excess, as to vex, fatigue, and disgust those who have no talents, and to determine them, as soon as they become free agents, to abandon all such tormenting acquirements. While by this incessant compulsion still more pernicious effects are often produced on those who actually possess genius ; for the natural constant reference in the mind to that public performance for which they are sedulously cultivating this talent, excites the same passions of envy, vanity, and competition in the dilettanti performers, as might be supposed to stimulate professional candidates for fame and profit at public games and theatrical exhibitions. Is this emulation, is this spirit of rivalry, is this hunger after public praise the temper which prudent parents would wish to excite and foster ? Besides, in *any* event the issue is not favourable : if the young performers are timid, they disgrace themselves, and distress their friends ; if courageous, their boldness offends still

* That accurate judge of the human heart, Madame de Maintenon, was so well aware of the danger resulting from some kinds of excellence, that after the young ladies of the Court of Louis Quatorze had distinguished themselves by the performance of some dramatic pieces of Racine, when her friends told her how admirably they had played their parts ; " Yes," answered this wise woman, " so admirably that they shall never play again."

more than their bad performance. Shall they then be studiously brought into situations in which failure discredits, and success disgusts?

May I venture, without being accused of pedantry to conclude this chapter with another reference to Pagan examples? The Hebrews, Egyptians, and Greeks, believed that they could more effectually teach their youth maxims of virtue, by calling in the aid of music and poetry; these maxims, therefore, they put into verses, and these verses were set to the most popular and simple tunes, which the children sang; thus was their love of goodness excited by the very instruments of their pleasure; and the senses, the taste, and the imagination, as it were, pressed into the service of religion and morals. Dare I appeal to Christian parents, if these arts are commonly used by *them*, as subsidiary to religion and to a system of morals much more worthy of every ingenious aid and association, which might tend to recommend them to the youthful mind? Dare I appeal to Christian parents, whether music, which fills up no trifling portion of their daughters' time, does not fill it without any moral end, or even without any specific object? Nay, whether some of the favourite songs of polished societies are not amatory, are not Anacreontic, more than quite become the modest lips of innocent youth and delicate beauty?

CHAP. V.

On the religious Employment of Time.—On the Manner in which Holidays are passed.—Selfishness and Inconsideration considered.—Dangers arising from the World.

THERE are many well-disposed parents, who, while they attend to these fashionable acquirements, do not neglect to infuse religious knowledge into the minds of their children; and having done this, are but too apt to conclude that they have done all, and have fully acquitted themselves of the important duties of education. For having, as they think, sufficiently grounded their daughters in religion, they do not scruple to al-

low them to spend almost the whole of their time idly like the daughters of worldly people. though it be one great point gained, to have induced young minds with the best knowledge, the work therefore by any means accomplished. "What more than others?" is a question which, in an extended sense, religious parents must be prepared to answer.

Such parents should go on to teach children the religious use of time, the duty of consecrating to every talent, every faculty, every possession, and devoting their whole lives to his glory. People of this sort should be more peculiarly on their guard against a spirit of idleness, and a slovenly habitual wasting of time, because this practice, by not assuming a palpable shape of guilt, carries little alarm to the conscience. Even religious characters are in danger on this score; for not allowing themselves to follow the world's excesses and diversions, they have consequently much time upon their hands; and instead of dedicating this time to its true purposes, they sometimes make as it were compensation to themselves for their abstinence from dangerous places of public resort, by an habitual frivolousness at home; by a superabundance of unprofitable small-talk, idle reading, and a constant and dull frittering away of time. Their days perhaps have been more free from actual evil; but it is often to be discovered to have been as unproductive as that of more worldly characters; and they will be found to have traded to as little purpose with their talents. But a Christian must take care to keep his conscience peculiarly alive to the unapparent, though formidable perils of unprofitableness.

To these, and to all, the author would earnestly recommend to accustom their children to pass alternately from serious business to active and animated recreation; they should carefully preserve them from long and torpid intervals between both, that languid indolence and spiritless trifling, that merely getting through of the day without stamping on it any character of active goodness or of intellectual profit, that slothfulness which wears out such large portions of

th young and old. It has, indeed, passed into an-
ism, that activity is necessary to virtue, even
g those who are not apprized that it is also indis-
ble to happiness. So far are many parents from

sensible of this truth, that vacations from school
ot merely allowed, but appointed to pass away in
some sauntering and indeterminate idleness, and
s done by erring tenderness by way of converting
olidays into pleasure ! Nay, the idleness is specifi-
made over to the child's mind, as the strongest
ssion of the fondness of the parent ! A dislike to
ing is thus systematically excited by preposterously
ing indolence into a reward for application !
the promise of doing nothing is held out as the
gest temptation, as well as the best recompence,
aving done well !

iese and such like errors of conduct arise from the
t, but very operative, principle of selfishness.
principle is obviously promoted by many habits
practices seemingly of little importance ; and in-
selfishness is so commonly interwoven with van-
nd inconsideration, that I have not always thought
cessary to mark the distinction. They are alter-
y cause and effect ; and are produced and re-pro-
l by reciprocal operation. They are a joint con-
acy who are mutually promoting each other's
yth and interest ; they are united by almost in-
able ties, and the indulgence of either is the grati-
ion of all. Ill-judging tenderness is in fact only
icealed self-love, which cannot bear to be witness
e uneasiness which a present disappointment, or
ulty or vexation, would cause to a darling child ;
which yet does not scruple by improper gratifica-
to store up for it future miseries, which the child
nfalibly suffer, though it may be at a distant pe-
which the selfish mother does not disturb herself
iticipating, because she thinks she may be saved the
of beholding.

another principle, something different from this,
gh it may properly fall under the head of selfish-
seems to actuate some parents in their conduct.

towards their children ; I mean, a certain slothfulness of mind, a love of ease, which imposes a voluntary blindness, and makes them not choose to see what will give them trouble to combat. From the persons in question we frequently hear such expressions as these : "Children will be children."—"My children, I suppose, are much like those of other people," &c. Thus we may observe this dangerous and delusive principle frequently turning off with a smile from the first indications of those tempers, which from their fatal tendency ought very seriously to be taken up. I would be understood now as speaking to conscientious parents, who consider it as a general duty to correct the faults of their children, but who from this indolence of mind, are extremely backward in *discovering* such faults, and are not very well pleased when they are pointed out by others. Such parents will do well to take notice, that whatever they consider it as a duty to *correct*, must be equally a duty to endeavour to *find out*. And this indolent love of ease is the more to be guarded against, as it not only leads parents into erroneous conduct towards their children, but is peculiarly dangerous to themselves. It is a fault frequently cherished from ignorance of its real character ; for, not bearing on it the strong features of deformity which mark many other vices, but on the contrary bearing some resemblance to virtue, it is frequently mistaken for the Christian graces of patience, meekness, and forbearance, than which nothing can be more opposite ; these proceeding from the Christian principle of self denial, the other from self-indulgence.

In this connection may I be permitted to remark on the practice at the tables of many families when the children are at home for the holidays ? Every delicacy is forced upon them, with the tempting remark, "that they cannot have this or that dainty at school." They are indulged in irregular hours for the same motive, "because they cannot have that indulgence at school." Thus the natural seeds of idleness, sensuality, and sloth, are at once cherished, by converting the periodical visit at home into a season of intemperance, late hours, and exemption from learning. So that children

habituated, at an age when lasting associations are formed in the mind, to connect the idea of study with that of hardship, of happiness with gluttony, and of leisure with loitering, feasting, or sleeping. Would it be better, would it not be kinder, to make them associate the delightful idea of home, with the gratification of the social affections, the fondness of mother, the kindness, and warmth, and confidence of sweet domestic attachments,

— And all the charities
Of father, son, and brother ?

I will venture to say, that those listless and vacant hours, when the thoughts have no precise object ; when imagination has nothing to shape ; when industry has no definitive pursuit ; when the mind and the body have no exercise, and the ingenuity has no acquisition, either to anticipate or to enjoy, are the longest, the most dull, and the least happy, which children of genius ever pass. Yes ! it is a few short and lively intervals of animated pleasure, separated from between the successive labours and duties of a well-ordered, busy day, looked forward to with hope, enjoyed with taste, and recollected without regret, which, both to men and to children, yield the largest portions of enjoyment. O snatch your offspring from adding to the number of those objects of future commiseration, who seek their happiness in doing nothing ! The animal may be gratified by it, but man is degraded. Life is but a short day ; but it is a working day. Activity *may* lead to evil ; but idleness *cannot* be led to good.

Young ladies should also be accustomed to set apart a portion of their time, as sacred to the poor, *

would be a noble employment, and well becoming the tenderness of the sex, if ladies were to consider the superintendence of the poor as their immediate office. They are peculiarly fitted for it ; for their own habits of life they are more intimately acquainted with the domestic wants than the other sex ; and in certain instances of distress and suffering peculiar to themselves, they should be expected to show more sympathy ; and they have obviously more leisure. There are certain religious societies, distinguished by simplicity of dress, manner, and language, whose poor are perhaps better taken care of than others ; and one reason may be, that they are immediately under the inspection of the women.

whether in relieving, instructing or working for it, and the performance of this duty must not be left to the event of contingent circumstances, or the operation of accidental impressions; but it must be established into a principle, and wrought into a habit. A specific portion of the day must be allotted to it, in which no common engagement must be allowed to intrench. Those periods of time, which are not, and are seldom turned to their proper use; and not short of a regular plan (which must however, be sometimes made to give way to circumstances) insures conscientious discharge of any duty. This will to furnish a powerful remedy for that selfishness which so strong holds (the truth cannot be too often repeated) it is the grand business of Christian education peculiarly to attack. If we were but aware how much better it makes ourselves to wish to see others better, to assist in making them so, we should find that good done would be of as much importance by habit of doing good, which it would induce in our own minds, as by its beneficial effects on the objects of our kindness. *

In what relates to pecuniary bounty, it will be requiring of young persons a very small sacrifice, if we teach them merely to give that money to the poor, which property belongs not to the child but to the parent; this sort of charity commonly subtracts little from their own pleasures, especially when what they have bestowed is immediately made up to them as a reward for their little fit of generosity. They will, by this plan, soon learn to give, not only for praise or for profit. The sacrifice of an orange to a little girl, or a feather to a great one, given at the expense of their own gratification, would be a better lesson in charity on its right ground, than a considerable sum of money to be presently replaced by the parent. An

* In addition to the instruction of the individual poor, and superintendence of charity schools, ladies might be highly useful in assisting the parochial clergy in the adoption of that excellent plan for the instruction of the ignorant suggested by the Bishop of Durham in his last admirable charge to his clergy. It is with pleasure the author is enabled to add that the scheme has actually been adopted with effect in that extensive diocese.

be habituating them early to combine two ideas
ought never to be separated, charity and self-

an antidote to selfishness, as well as to pride and
ence, they should also very early be taught to
in all the little offices in their power for them-
; they should be accustomed not to be insolently
sing their supposed prerogative of rank and
h, by calling for servants where there is no real
on; above all, they should be accustomed to
er the domestics' hours of meals and rest as al-
sacred, and the golden rule should be practically
uniformly enforced, even on so trifling an occa-
s ringing a bell through mere wantonness, or self-
or pride.

check the growth of inconsiderateness, young
should early be taught to discharge their little
with punctuality. They should be made sensi-
f the cruelty of obliging trades-people to call
for the money due to them; and of hindering
retaining those whose time is the source of their
tence, under pretence of some frivolous engage-
which ought to be made to bend to the comfort
advantage of others. They should conscientiously
sufficient time for the execution of their orders;
with a Christian circumspection, be careful not to
work-people, by needless hurry, into losing their
or breaking the Sabbath. I have known a lady
her gown to a mantua-maker on the Saturday
, to whom she would not for the world say in so
words, "You must work through the whole of
day," while she was virtually compelling her to
, by an injunction to bring the gown home fin-
on the Monday morning, on pain of her dis-
re. To these hardships numbers are continually
by good-natured but inconsiderate employers.
ese petty exactions of inconsideration furnish al-
stant aliment to selfishness, let not a desire to
eract them be considered as leading to too minute
s; nothing is too frivolous for animadversion,
tends to fix a bad habit in the superior, or to
d the feelings of the dependant.

tenderness of their behavior to their inferiors. This dispensation of God, which excites so much murmure, would, were it thus practically, tend to establish the glory of that Being, who is often charged with injustice; for God himself is attacked in many of the invectives against governments, and the supposed arbitrary disproportion of rank and riches.

This dispensation, thus properly improved, at once call into exercise the generosity, kindness, and forbearance of the superior; and the patience, and gratitude of the inferior: and thus we are vindicating the *ways* of Providence, we are accomplishing his *plan*, by bringing into action the virtues of both classes, which would have had no effect had there been no inequality in station. Those more exalted persons who are incessantly contending for the privileges of rank, should never lose sight of the religious duties and considerate virtues which the possession of rank imposes on themselves; duties and virtues which can never be inseparable from those privileges. The inferior classes have little real right to complain in this respect, let the great be watchful to give the little cause to complain of *manners*. In order to let them carefully train up their children to

s cannot apply. By such means every lesson of politics may be converted into a lesson of piety ; and a bit of condescending love might win over some, from a spirit of invective would only inflame.

Among the instances of negligence into which even religiously disposed parents and teachers are apt to fall, it is, that they are not sufficiently attentive in finding interesting employment for the Sunday. They do not make a scruple of sometimes allowing their children to fill up the intervals of public worship with their ordinary employments and common school exercises. They are not aware that they are training their young to an early and a systematic profanation of the Sabbath by this custom ; for to children, their tasks and their business ; to them a French or Latin exercise is as serious an occupation as the exercise of a trade or profession is to a man ; and if they are allowed to think the one right *now*, they will not be brought hereafter to think that the other is wrong ; for the opinions and practices fixed at this important season are not easily altered ; and an early habit becomes rooted to an inveterate prejudice. By this oversight even the friends of religion may be contributing eventually to that abolition of the Lord's day, so devotedly wished, and so indefatigably laboured after by its enemies, the desired preliminary to the destruction of whatever is most dear to Christians. What obstruction could it offer to the general progress of youth, if all their Sunday exercises (which, with reading, composing, transcribing and getting by heart, might be extended to an entertaining variety) were adapted to the peculiar nature of the day ?

Those whose own spirits and vigour of mind are exhausted by the amusements of the world, and who therefore grow faint and languid under the continuance of serious occupation, are not aware how different the case is with lively young people, whose spring of action has not been broken by habitual indulgence. They are not aware that a firm and well disciplined intellect wants, comparatively, little amusement. The mere change from one book to another, is a relief almost amounting to pleasure. But then the variation

must be judiciously made, so that to novelty is superadded comparative amusement ; that is, education should be made from the more to the less, as in the famous book. If care be thus taken that greater exertion of the mental powers shall not be required, through length of application, there is less abatement of disposition to exert them ; such a well ordered distinction, will produce on the mind nearly the effect as a new employment.

It is not meant to impose on them such rigour as shall convert the day they should be taught to love into a day of burdens and hardships ; or to deprive them of such innocent enjoyments as are common with a season of holy rest. It is intended merely to suggest that there should be a marked distinction in the nature of their employments and studies ; the observance or neglect of this, as was best observed, their future notions and principles will in a good degree be formed. The Gospel, in rescuing the Lord's day from the rigorous bondage of the Sabbath, never lessened the obligation to keep it holy, nor meant to sanction any secular occupation. Christianity in lightening its austerities has not destroyed the end of its institution ; in purifying its spirit, it has not abolished its object.

Though the author, chiefly writing with a view to domestic instruction, has purposely avoided entering the disputed question, whether a school or a home education be best ; a question which perhaps must ultimately be decided by the state of the individual and the state of the individual school ; yet still I leave to suggest one remark, which peculiarly belongs to a school education ; namely, the general habit of converting the Sunday into a visiting day by visiting the schools, and thus losing time ; as if the appropriate instructions of the Lord's day were the cheapest sacrifice which could be made to pleasure. Even in those schools, in which religion is considered as an indispensable part of instruction, this kind of instruction is almost exclusively limited to Sundays : how then are girls ever to

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progress in this most important article, if they are educated to lose the religious advantages of the school, the sake of having more dainties for dinner abroad ?

This remark cannot be supposed to apply to the visits which children make to religious parents ; and indeed it applies to those cases where the school is a contentious school, and the visit a trifling visit.

Among other subjects which engross a good share of worldly conversation, one of the most attracting is beauty. Many ladies have often a random way of speaking rapturously on the general importance and the enlivening power of beauty, who are yet prudent enough to be very unwilling to let their own daughters out they are handsome. Perhaps the contrary would be safer. If the little listener were not constantly hearing that beauty is the best gift, she would not be so vain from fancying herself to be the gifted. Be less solicitous, therefore, to conceal from her a secret, which, with all your watchfulness, will be sure to find out, without your telling ; but do not seek to lower the general value of beauty in her estimation. Use your daughter in all things to a different standard from that of the world. It is not by our people and servants only that she will be told of being pretty. She will be hearing it not only from gay ladies, but from grave men ; she will be hearing it from the whole world around her. The antidote to the present danger is not now to be search for ; it must be clearly operating ; it must have been provided for in the foundation laid in the general principle she has been imbibing before this particular estimation of beauty came in question. And this general principle is an habitual indifference to flattery. She must have learnt not to be intoxicated by the praise of the world. She must have learnt to estimate things by their intrinsic worth, rather than by the world's estimation. Speak to her with particular kindness and commendation of plain but amiable girls ; mention with compassion such as are handsome but ill-educated ; speak casually of some who were once thought beautiful, but have ceased to be good ; make use of the

we have spent almost the whole of their time ex-
actly in the language of worldly people. Now
though it is comparatively good, to have adopted the
more plain and in fact knowledge, the work is ac-
companied by my own satisfaction. "What do y
"know about this?" is a question which, in a mor
several half, various points must be pursued t
ally.

But we must build up in our children the re-
ligion of a God, the duty of contributing to Go
our money, every faculty, every possession, and of de-
voting our whole lives to his glory. People of piet
must be more particularly on their guard against
lack of spirit, and a steadily habitual waiting o
not, would be the greatest by not assuming a palpabl
sign of piety, even the signs to the conscience
that religious characters are in danger on this side
as well as the other, to follow the world in its
moral and spiritual, they have consequently not
not upon their heads; and instead of dedicating th
time to the service of their purposes, they sometime
make it a mere compensation in themselves for their
religiosity from various places of public resort, b
an habitual frivolousness at home; by a superabund
ance of superficial small-talk, idle reading, and a qu
ce and full running away of time. Their day per
haps has been more free from actual evil; but it will
often be allowed to have been as unproductive a
day as ever worldly characters; and they will be
found to have failed in a little purpose with their mo
ambitions. But a Christian must take care to keep h
conscience constantly alive to the unapparent, thoug
familiar points of unprofitableness.

He must, and so all, the author would
exhort to awaken their children to
from serious business to active and
tion: they should carefully preserve
long and torpid intervals between
indecisive and spiritless rising, al
of the day without stamping
active goodness or of unrelax
drawings which wears out f

both young and old. It has, indeed, passed into a maxim, that activity is necessary to virtue, even to those who are not apprized that it is also indispensable to happiness. So far are many parents from being sensible of this truth, that vacations from school are not merely allowed, but appointed to pass away in some sauntering and indeterminate idleness, and is done by erring tenderness by way of converting holidays into pleasure ! Nay, the idleness is specifically made over to the child's mind, as the strongest effusion of the fondness of the parent ! A dislike to study is thus systematically excited by preposterously turning indolence into a reward for application ! the promise of doing nothing is held out as the greatest temptation, as well as the best recompence, for having done well !

These and such like errors of conduct arise from the great, but very operative, principle of selfishness. This principle is obviously promoted by many habits and practices seemingly of little importance ; and indolence and selfishness is so commonly interwoven with vanity and inconsideration, that I have not always thought it necessary to mark the distinction. They are alternately cause and effect ; and are produced and reproduced by reciprocal operation. They are a joint conspiracy who are mutually promoting each other's strength and interest ; they are united by almost inviolable ties, and the indulgence of either is the gratification of all. Ill-judging tenderness, in fact only

concealed self-love, cannot be witness
to the uneasiness which these
cultures or vacan- tions, or
which - do - - - - -
to - - - - -

be witness
ment, or
ing char-
grat-
with
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and

towards their children ; I mean, a certain slothfulness of mind, a love of ease, which imposes a voluntary blindness, and makes them not choole to see what will give them trouble to combat. From the persons in question we frequently hear such expressions as these : "Children will be children."—"My children, I suppose, are much like those of other people," &c. Thus we may observe this dangerous and delusive principle frequently turning off with a smile from the first indications of those tempers, which from their fatal tendency ought very seriously to be taken up. I would be understood now as speaking to conscientious parents, who consider it as a general duty to correct the faults of their children, but who from this indolence of mind, are extremely backward in *discovering* such faults, and are not very well pleased when they are pointed out by others. Such parents will do well to take notice, that whatever they consider it as a duty to *correct*, must be equally a duty to endeavour to *bring out*. And this indolent love of ease is the more to be guarded against, as it not only leads parents into erroneous conduct towards their children, but is peculiarly dangerous to themselves. It is a fault frequently cherished from ignorance of its real character ; for, not bearing on it the strong features of deformity which mark many other vices, but on the contrary bearing some resemblance to virtue, it is frequently mistaken for the Christian graces of patience, meekness, and forbearance, than which nothing can be more opposite ; these proceeding from the Christian principle of self denial, the other from self-indulgence.

In this connection may I be permitted to remark on the practice at the tables of many families when the children are at home for the holidays ? Every delicacy is forced upon them, with the tempting remark, "that they cannot have this or that dainty at school." They are indulged in irregular hours for the same motive, "because they cannot have that indulgence at school." Thus the natural seeds of idleness, sensuality, and sloth, are at once cherished, by converting the periodical visit at home into a season of intemperance, late hours, and exemption from learning. So that children

re habituated, at an age when lasting associations are formed in the mind, to connect the idea of study with that of hardship, of happiness with gluttony, and of pleasure with loitering, feasting, or sleeping. Would not be better, would it not be kinder, to make them combine the delightful idea of home, with the gratification of the social affections, the fondness of maternal love, the kindness, and warmth, and confidence of these sweet domestic attachments,

——— And all the charities
Of father, son, and brother ?

I will venture to say, that those listless and vacant days, when the thoughts have no precise object ; when the imagination has nothing to shape ; when industry has no definitive pursuit ; when the mind and the body have no exercise, and the ingenuity has no acquisition either to anticipate or to enjoy, are the longest, the dullest, and the least happy, which children of spirit and genius ever pass. Yes ! it is a few short but keen and lively intervals of animated pleasure, snatched from between the successive labours and duties of a well-ordered, busy day, looked forward to with hope, enjoyed with taste, and recollected without remorse, which, both to men and to children, yield the truest portions of enjoyment. O snatch your offspring from adding to the number of those objects of supreme commiseration, who seek their happiness in doing nothing ! The animal may be gratified by it, but the man is degraded. Life is but a short day ; but it is a working day. Activity *may* lead to evil ; but inactivity *cannot* be led to good.

Young ladies should also be accustomed to set apart a fixed portion of their time, as sacred to the poor, *

* It would be a noble employment, and well becoming the tendernefs of their sex, if ladies were to consider the superintendence of the poor as their immediate office. They are peculiarly fitted for it ; for from their own habits of life they are more intimately acquainted with domestic wants than the other sex ; and in certain instances of sickness and suffering peculiar to themselves, they should be expected to have more sympathy ; and they have obviously more leisure. There is a certain religious society, distinguished by simplicity of dress, manner, and language, whose poor are perhaps better taken care of than any other ; and one reason may be, that they are immediately under the inspection of the women.

whether in relieving, instructing or working for and the performance of this duty must not be the event of contingent circumstances, or the tion of accidental impressions; but it must be lished into a principle, and wrought into a hab specific portion of the day must be allotted to which no common engagement must be allo intrench. Those periods of time, which are no are seldom turned to their proper use; and n short of a regular plan (which must however, be times made to give way to circumstances) insur conscientious discharge of any duty. This wi to furnish a powerful remedy for that selfishness strong holds (the truth cannot be too often rep it is the grand business of Christian education ually to attack. If we were but aware how muc ter it makes ourselves to wish to see others bette to assist in making them so, we should find th good done would be of as much importance b habit of doing good, which it would induce i own minds, as by its beneficial effects on the obj our kindnesses. *

In what relates to pecuniary bounty, it will quiring of young persons a very small sacrifice, i teach them merely to give that money to the which property belongs not to the child but to t rent; this sort of charity commonly subtracts from their own pleasures, especially when wha have bestowed is immediately made up to them reward for their little fit of generosity. They w this plan, soon learn to give, not only for prai for profit. The sacrifice of an orange to a littl or a feather to a great one, given at the exp their own gratification, would be a better les charity on its right ground, than a considerable f money to be presently replaced by the parent.

* In addition to the instruction of the individual poor, superintendence of charity schools, ladies might be highly usef sisting the parochial clergy in the adoption of that excellent the instruction of the ignorant suggested by the Bishop of Do his last admirable charge to his clergy. It is with pleasure th is enabled to add that the scheme has actually been adopted w effect in that extensive diocese.

ld be habituating them early to combine two ideas
h ought never to be separated, charity and self-
al.

as an antidote to selfishness, as well as to pride and
lence, they should also very early be taught to
orm all the little offices in their power for them-
s; they should be accustomed not to be insolently
ciling their supposed prerogative of rank and
th, by calling for servants where there is no real
sion; above all, they should be accustomed to
ider the domestics' hours of meals and rest as al-
sacred, and the golden rule should be practically
uniformly enforced, even on so trifling an occa-
as ringing a bell through mere wantonness, or self-
or pride.

o check the growth of inconsiderateness, young
s should early be taught to discharge their little
s with punctuality. They should be made sensi-
of the cruelty of obliging trades-people to call
a for the money due to them; and of hindering
detaining those whose time is the source of their
istence, under pretence of some frivolous engage-
t, which ought to be made to bend to the comfort
advantage of others. They should conscientiously
v sufficient time for the execution of their orders;
with a Christian circumspection, be careful not to
e work-people, by needless hurry, into losing their
or breaking the Sabbath. I have known a lady
her gown to a mantua-maker on the Saturday
t, to whom she would not for the world say in so
y words, "You must work through the whole of
unday," while she was virtually compelling her to
o, by an injunction to bring the gown home fin-
l on the Monday morning, on pain of her dis-
surre. To these hardships numbers are continually
en by good-natured but inconsiderate employers.
hese petty exactions of inconsideration furnish also
stant aliment to selfishness, let not a desire to
interact them be considered as leading to too minute
ils; nothing is too frivolous for animadversion,
h tends to fix a bad habit in the superior, or to
ad the feelings of the dependant.

Would it not be turning those political disputes which are now so warmly agitating, to a true account, and give the best practical answer to vulgar declamations on the inequality of human institutions, were the rich carefully to instruct their children to soften that inevitable inequality by the mild tenderness of their behavior to their inferior dispensation of God, which excites so many murmurs, would, were it thus practically intended to establish the glory of that Being who is often charged with injustice ; for God himself is directly attacked in many of the invectives against governments, and the supposed arbitrary and disproportion of rank and riches.

This dispensation, thus properly improved at once call into exercise the generosity, kindness, forbearance of the superior ; and the patience, submission, and gratitude of the inferior : and thus were vindicating the *ways* of Providence, were accomplishing his *plan*, by bringing into action the virtues of both classes, which would have had little effect had there been no inequality in station and fortune. Those more exalted persons who are continually contending for the privileges of rank and power should never lose sight of the religious duties and moderate virtues which the possession of rank and power imposes on themselves ; duties and virtues which can never be inseparable from those privileges. The inferior classes have little real right to complain in this respect, let the great be watchful to give the poor little cause to complain of *manners*. In order to let them carefully train up their children to feel the individual kindness those cases of hardship which they cannot reach ; let them obviate, by an active and directed compassion, those imperfections of the best constructed human institutions must unavoidably partake ; and, by the exercise of private benevolence inculcated, soften those distresses which can never come under the cognizance of even the best government. Let them teach their offspring, that the charity of the rich should ever be subsidiary to the public good in those numberless instances to which the n

rs cannot apply. By such means every lesson of civility may be converted into a lesson of piety ; and a bit of condescending love might win over some, when a spirit of invective would only inflame.

Among the instances of negligence into which even religiously disposed parents and teachers are apt to fall, it is, that they are not sufficiently attentive in finding an interesting employment for the Sunday. They do not make a scruple of sometimes allowing their children to fill up the intervals of public worship with their ordinary employments and common school exercises. They are not aware that they are training their young people to an early and a systematic profanation of the Sabbath by this custom ; for to children, their tasks and their business ; to them a French or Latin exercise is as serious an occupation as the exercise of a trade or profession is to a man ; and if they are allowed to think the one right *now*, they will not be brought hereafter to think that the other is wrong ; for the opinions and practices fixed at this important season are not easily altered ; and an early habit becomes rooted to an inveterate prejudice. By this oversight even the friends of religion may be contributing eventually to that abolition of the Lord's day, so devotedly wished, and so indefatigably laboured after by its enemies, the desired preliminary to the destruction of whatever is most dear to Christians. What obstruction could it offer to the general progress of youth, if all their Sunday exercises (which, with reading, composing, transcribing and getting by heart, might be extended to an entertaining variety) were adapted to the peculiar nature of the day ?

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Though the author, chiefly writing with a view to domestic instruction, has purposely avoided entering into the disputed question, whether a school or a home education be best ; a question which perhaps must ultimately be decided by the state of the individual and the state of the individual school ; yet still I cannot leave to suggest one remark, which peculiarly belongs to a school education ; namely, the general habit of converting the Sunday into a visiting day by squandering time ; as if the appropriate instructions of the Lord's day were the cheapest sacrifice which could be made to pleasure. Even in those schools, in which religion is considered as an indispensable part of instruction, this kind of instruction is almost exclusively limited to Sundays : how then are girls ever to

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progress in this most important article, if they are situated to lose the religious advantages of the school, the sake of having more dainties for dinner abroad? This remark cannot be supposed to apply to the visits which children make to religious parents; and indeed it only applies to those cases where the school is a contentious school, and the visit a trifling visit.

Among other subjects which engross a good share of worldly conversation, one of the most attracting is beauty. Many ladies have often a random way of speaking rapturously on the general importance and the ennobling power of beauty, who are yet prudent enough to be very unwilling to let their own daughters out they are handsome. Perhaps the contrary might be safer. If the little listener were not constantly hearing that beauty is the best gift, she would not be so vain from fancying herself to be the gifted. Be less solicitous, therefore, to conceal from her a secret, which, with all your watchfulness, will be sure to find out, without your telling; but rather seek to lower the general value of beauty in her estimation. Use your daughter in all things to a different standard from that of the world. It is not by her people and servants only that she will be told of being pretty. She will be hearing it not only from gay ladies, but from grave men; she will be hearing it from the whole world around her. The antidote to the present danger is not now to be search for; it must be clearly operating; it must have been provided for in the foundation laid in the general principle she has been imbibing before this particular estimation of beauty came in question. And this general principle is an habitual indifference to flattery. She must have learnt not to be intoxicated by the praise of the world. She must have learnt to estimate things by their intrinsic worth, rather than by the world's estimation. Speak to her with particular kindness and commendation of plain but amiable girls; mention with compassion such as are handsome but ill-educated; speak casually of some who were once thought beautiful, but have ceased to be good; make use of the

arguments arising from the shortness and uncertainty of beauty, as strong additional reasons for making that which is little valuable in itself, still less valuable. As it is a *new* idea which is always dangerous, you may thus break the force of this danger by allowing her an early introduction to this inevitable knowledge, which would become more interesting, and of course more perilous by every additional year : and if you can guard against that fatal and almost universal error of letting her see that she is more beloved on account of her beauty, her familiarity with the idea may be less dangerous than its novelty afterwards would prove.

But the great and constant peril to which young persons in the higher walks of life are exposed, is the prevailing turn and spirit of general conversation. Even the children of better families, who are well-instructed when at their studies, are yet at other times continually beholding the world set up in the highest and most advantageous point of view. Seeing the world ! knowing the world ! standing well with the world ! making a figure in the world ! is spoken of as including the whole sum and substance of human advantages. They hear their education almost exclusively alluded to with reference to the *figure* it will enable them to make in the world. In almost all companies they hear all that the world admires, spoken of with admiration ; rank flattered, fame coveted, power sought, beauty idolized, money considered as the one thing needful, and as the atoning substitute for the want of all other things ; profit held up as the reward of virtue ; and worldly estimation as the just and highest prize of laudable ambition ; and after the very spirit of the world has been thus habitually infused into them all the week, one cannot expect much effect from their being coldly and customarily told now and then on Sundays, that they must not “ love the world, nor the “ things of the world.” To tell them once in seven days that it is a sin to gratify an appetite which you have been whetting and stimulating the preceding six, is to require from them a power of self control, which our knowledge of the impetuosity of the passions, ef-

pecially in early age, should have taught us is impossible.

This is not the place to animadvert on the usual misapplication of the phrase, "knowing the world;" which term is commonly applied in the way of panegyric, to keen, designing, selfish, ambitious men, who study mankind in order to turn them to their own account. But in the true sense of the expression, the sense which Christian parents would wish to impress on their children, to know the world is to know its emptiness, its vanity, its futility, and its wickedness. To know it is to despise it, to be on our guard against it, to labour to live above it; and in this view an obscure Christian in a village may be said to know the world better than a hoary courtier or wily politician. For how can they be said to *know* it, who go on to love it, to value it, to be led captive by its allurements, to give their soul in exchange for its lying promises?

But while so false an estimate is often made in fashionable society of the real value of things; that is, while Christianity does *not* furnish the standard, and human opinion *does*; while the multiplying our desires is considered as a symptom of elegance, though to subdue those desires is the grand criterion of religion; while moderation is beheld as indicating a poorness of spirit, though to that very poverty of spirit the highest promise of the Gospel is assigned; while worldly wisdom is sedulously enjoined by worldly friends, in contradiction to that assertion, "that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God;" while the praise of man is to be anxiously sought in opposition to that assurance, that "The fear of man worketh a snare;" while they are taught all the week, that "The friendship of the world" is the wisest pursuit; and on Sundays that "it is enmity with God;" while these things are so (and that they are so in a good degree who will undertake to deny?) may we not venture to affirm that a Christian education, though it be not an impossible, is yet a very difficult work.

CHAP. VI.

THE EARLY FORMING OF HABITS.

*On the Necessity of forming the Judgment to direct the
Habits.*

IT can never be too often repeated, that one of the great objects of education is the forming of habits. I may be suspected of having recurred too often, though hitherto only incidentally, to this topic. It is, however, a topic of such importance, that it will be useful to consider it somewhat more in detail; as the early forming of right habits on sound principles seems to be one of the grand secrets of virtue and happiness.

The forming of any one good habit seems to be effected rather by avoiding the opposite bad habit, and resisting every temptation to the opposite vice, than by the mere occasional practice of the virtue required. *Humility*, for instance, is less an act than a disposition of mind. It is not so much a single performance of some detached humble deed, as an incessant watchfulness against every propensity to pride. *Sobriety* is not a prominent ostensible thing; it evidently consists in a series of negations, and not of actions. It is a conscientious habit of resisting every incentive to intemperance.—*Meekness* is best attained and exemplified by guarding against every tendency to anger, impatience, and resentment.—A habit of *attention* and application is formed by early and constant vigilance against a trifling spirit and a wandering mind.—An habit of *industry*, by watching against the blandishments of pleasure, the waste of small portions of time, and the encroachment of small indulgences.

Now, to stimulate us to an earnest desire of working any or all of these habits into the minds of children, it will be of importance to consider what a variety of uses each of them involves.

To take, for example, the case of moderation and temperance. It would seem to a superficial observer, of no very great importance to acquire a habit of self-

l in respect either to the elegancies of decoration, the delicacies of the table, or to the common use of pleasure; that there can be no occasion for difference to luxuries harmless in themselves, and used of daily moderation in those persons who are blessed of affluence, and to whom therefore, as the end is no object, so the forbearance is thought of no importance. Those acts of self-denial, I admit, when exemplified by themselves, appear to be of no great value, yet they assume high importance, if you consider it is to have, as it were, dried up the spring of only importunate passion; if you reflect, after any one conquest is obtained, how easily, comparatively speaking, it is followed up by others.

How much future virtue and self-government, in so important things, may a mother therefore be owing to that child, who should always remain in as good a situation as she is in when the first foundations of good quality are laying; but should any reverse of fortune take place in the daughter, how much integrity and independence of mind also may be prepared for by the early excision of superfluous desire. She, having been trained to subdue these propensities, can in all probability, be preserved from running into dissipation and dissolute company, merely for the sake of the splendour which may be attached to it. She will be rescued from the temptation to do wrong things, for the sake of pleasures and enjoyments from which she cannot abstain. She is preserved from the danger of flattering those whom she loves; because her moderate mind and well-ordered desires do not solicit indulgencies, which could only be procured by mean compliances. For she will have been habituated to consider the *character* as the governing circumstance of attachment, and the splendour as an accident, which may or may not belong to it; and which, when it does, as it is not a ground of merit in the possessor, so it is not to be the ground of her attachment. The habit of self-control, in small, as well as in great things, involves in the aggregate less loss of pleasure, than will be experienced by disappointments in the mind ever yielding itself to the love of

present indulgences, whenever those indulgences should be abridged or withdrawn.

She who has been accustomed to have an early habit of restraint exercised over all her appetites and temper; she who has been used to set bounds to her desires as a general principle, will have learned to withstand a passion for dress and personal ornaments; and the woman who has conquered this propensity, has surmounted one of the most domineering temptations which assail the sex. While this seemingly little circumstance, if neglected, and the opposite habit formed, may be the first step to every successive error, and every consequent distress. Those women who are ruined by seduction in the lower classes, and those who are made miserable by ambitious marriages in the higher, will be more frequently found to owe their misery to an ungoverned passion for dress and show, than to motives more apparently bad. An habitual moderation in this article growing out of a pure self-denying principle; and not arising from the affectation of a singularity, which may have more pride in it, than others feel in the indulgence of any of the things which this singularity renounces, includes many valuable advantages. Modesty, simplicity, humility, oeconomy, prudence, liberality, charity, are almost inseparably, and not very remotely, connected with an habitual victory over personal vanity, and a turn to personal expence. The inferior and less striking virtues are the smaller pearls, which serve to string and connect the great ones.

An early and unremitting zeal in forming the mind to an habit of attention, not only produces the outward expression of good breeding, as one of its incidental advantages; but involves, or rather creates, better qualities than itself; while vacancy and inattention not only produce vulgar manners, but are usually the indication, if not of an ordinary, yet of a neglected understanding. To the habitually inattentive, books offer little benefit; company affords little improvement; while a self-imposed attention sharpens observation, and creates a spirit of inspection and inquiry, which often lifts a common understanding to a degree of eminence in knowledge, sagacity, and usefulness, which

lent or negligent genius does not always reach. The habit of attention exercises intellect, quickens discernment, multiplies ideas, enlarges the power of combining images and comparing characters, and gives a facility of picking up improvement from circumstances almost promising; and gaining instruction from those that, but frequently recurring occasions, which the diligent and the negligent turn to no account. Scarcely anything or person is so unproductive, as not to yield some fruit to the attentive and sedulous collector of knowledge. But this is far from being the highest praise of a person; she, who early imposes on herself a habit of strict attention to whatever she is engaged in, wages early war with wandering thoughts, suppresses reveries, and that disqualifying train of busy, unprofitable imaginations, by which the idle are occupied, and the absent are absorbed. She who directs her intellectual powers in action, studies with method, herself, her books, and the world. Wherefore, in whose undisciplined minds vagrant thoughts have been suffered to range without restriction on ordinary occasions, will find they cannot easily call them to aid, when wanted to assist in higher duties. Thoughts, which are indulged in habitual wandering, will not be easily restrained in the solemnities of public worship or private devotion.

But in speaking of the necessary habits, it must be observed that the habit of unremitting *industry*, which is so closely connected with those of which we have made mention, cannot be too early or too sedulously formed. Let not the sprightly and the brilliant regard industry as a Plebian quality, as a quality to be cultivated only by those who have their bread to earn, and their fortune to make. But let them respect it, and treat it as an habit to which many elevated characters, in a good measure, owed their distinction. The great men in science, the leaders in literature, legislators, statesmen, even apostles and reformers would not, stand in so eminent a degree, have enlightened, consoled, and astonished the world; had they not been diligent possessors of this sober and unostentatious quality.

It is the quality to which the immortal Newton

application. We must, it is true, make some concessions for the humility of the speaker. Yet it is overrating its value, to assert that industry is the first and hard working pioneer, who by persevering labour removes obstructions, overcomes difficulties, clears intricacies, and thus facilitates the march, and aids the victories of genius.

An exact habit of *economy* is of the same family with the two foregoing qualities; and, like them, is the prolific parent of a numerous offspring of virtues. For want of the early engrafting of this practice on the only legitimate stock—a sound principle of integrity—may we not in too many instances in subsequent life almost apply to the fatal effects of domestic prodigality, what Tacitus observes of a lavish profligacy in the expenditure of public money—that an Exchequer which is exhausted by prodigality, will probably be replenished by crimes.

Those who are early trained to scrupulous punctuality in the division of time, and an exactness to the hour in their childish business, will have learnt how much *economy* of time is promoted by habits of punctuality when they shall enter on the more important business of life. By getting one employment cleared up exactly as the succeeding employment shall be claimed to be dispatched, they will learn two things

smallest occasions. But I refrain from enlarging this point as it will be discussed in another part of work.*

It requires perhaps still more sedulity to lay early first foundation of those interior habits, which are founded on watchfulness against such faults as do not betray themselves by breaking out into open excess; and which there would therefore be less difficulty in indulging. It should more particularly make part of the first elements of education, to try to imprint into the mind that particular principle which stands in opposition to those evil tempers, to which the youthful pupil is more immediately addicted. As it must not be followed up too closely, so it can hardly be begun too early. May we not borrow an inopportune illustration of this truth from the fabulous Heroic Grecian story? He who was one day to perform exploits, which should fill the earth with his renown, began by conquering his infancy; and it was a preliminary to his delivering the world from monsters in his infancy, that he should set out by strangling the serpents in his cradle.

It must however be observed, that diligent care is exercised; that, together with the gradual formation of these and other useful *habits*, an adequate attention be employed to the forming of the *judgment*; to framing such a sound constitution of mind, as shall be the power of directing all the faculties of the understanding, and all the qualities of the heart, to their proper places and due bounds, to observe just proportions, and maintain their right station, in reason, order, and dependence.

For instance, while the young person's mind is training in those habits of attention and industry which we have been recommending; great care must be used that her judgment be so enlightened as to enable her to form sound notions with regard to what is really good by the attentive pursuit, without which discriminating power, application would only be actively misapplied; and ardour and industry would but serve

* See Chapter on Definitions.

Again, if the judgment be not well informed of the nature and true ends of temperance, the ill-informed mind might be led into a superstitious reliance on the merits of self-denial; and resting in the performance of a few outward observances, without any confidence in the spirit of this Christian virtue, might be led to believe that the kingdom of heaven was the *abstinence* from "meat and drink," and "not peace, and righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The same well-ordered judgment will also be required in superintending and regulating the household economy; for extravagance being rather a negative than a positive term, the true art of regulation and temperance, is not to proportion it to the fashion, or opinion or practice of others, but to our own reason and our own circumstances. Aristippus being reproached of extravagance by one who was not rich, and who he had given six crowns for a small fish, said to him, "Why, what would you have given?"—"A pence," answered the other. "Then," said Aristippus, "our economy is equal; for six pence are no more to me, than twelve pence are to you."

It is the more important to enlighten the judgment in this point, because so predominant is the influence of custom and fashion, that men of unfixed principles are driven to borrow other people's judgment of them.

kinds we are inculcating this amiable virtue, of the broad line of distinction between Christian meekness and that well-bred tone and gentle manner which passes current for it in the world. We must teach them also to distinguish between an humble opinion of our own ability to judge, and a servile dereliction of truth and principle, in order to purchase the poor praise of indiscriminate compliance and yielding softness. We must lead them to distinguish accurately between honesty and obstinacy, between perseverance and perverseness, between firmness and prejudice. We must convince them that it is not meekness, but selfishness, when through a dishonest dread of offending the prosperous, or displeasing the powerful, we fear to recommend, or refuse to support, those whom it is our duty to recommend or to support. That it is selfishness and not meekness, when through fear of forfeiting any portion of our reputation, or risking our own favour with others, we refuse to bear our testimony to suspected worth or discredited virtue.*

CHAP. VII.

Filial Obedience not the Character of the Age.—A Comparison with the preceding Age in this Respect.—Those who cultivate the Mind advised to study the Nature of the Soil.—Unpromising Children often make strong Characters.—Teachers too apt to devote their pains almost exclusively to Children of Parts.

AMONG the real improvements of modern times, and they are not a few, it is to be feared that the growth of filial obedience cannot be included. Who can for-

* To this criminal timidity, Madame de Maintenon, a woman of parts and piety, sacrificed the ingenious and amiable Racine; whom, while she had taste enough to admire, she had not the generosity to defend, when the Royal favour was withdrawn from him. A still darker cloud hangs over her fame, on account of the selfish neutrality she maintained in not interposing her good offices between the resentments of the King and the sufferings of the Hugonots. It is a heavy aggravation of her fault, that she herself had been educated in the faith of these persecuted people.

principles? The *rights of man* have been difficult, we are somewhat wearied with the discussion these have been opposed, as the next stage in the progress of illumination, and with more presumptuous prudence, *the rights of woman*. It follows, according to the natural progression of human things, the next influx of that irradiation which our enlightenings are pouring in upon us, will illuminate the world with grave descants on the *rights of youth*, the *rights of children*, the *rights of babies*!

This revolutionary spirit in families suggests a mark, that among the faults with which it has too much the fashion of recent times to load the story of the incomparable Milton, one of the charges brought against his private character (for with his political character we have here nothing to do) has been that he was so severe a father as to have compelled his daughters, after he was blind, to read aloud to him for his sole pleasure, Greek and Latin authors of which they did not understand a word. But this is in nothing more than an instance of the strict domestic regulations of the age in which Milton lived, and should not be brought forward as a proof of the severity of his individual temper. Nor indeed is it an

Is the author then inculcating the harsh doctrine of paternal austeriſy? By no means. It drives the gentle ſpirit to artifice, and the rugged to deſpair. It ſtrews deceit and cunning, the moſt hopeleſs and uſeleſs in the whole catalogue of female failings. Unſubdued anger in the teacher, and inability to diſcriminate between venial errors and premeditated offence, though they may lead a timid creature to hide wrong tempers, or to conceal bad actions, will not help her to ſubdue the one or to correct the other. The dread of ſeverity will drive terrified children, to ſeek, not for reformation, but for impunity. A reaſonleſs to forgive them promotes frankneſs: and we ſhould, above all things, encourage them to be frank, in order to come at their faults. They have not more faults for being open, they only *diſcover* more; and to know the worſt of the character we have to regulate will enable us to make it better.

Discipline, however, is not cruelty, and reſtraint is not ſeverity. A diſcriminating teacher will appreciate the individual character of each pupil, in order to appropriate her management. We muſt ſtrengthen the feeble, while we repel the bold. We cannot educate by a *receipt*; for after ſtudying the beſt rules, and after digeſting them in the beſt ſyſtem, much muſt depend on contingent circumſtances; for that which is good may yet be inapplicable. The cultivator of the human mind muſt, like the gardener, ſtudy diverſities of ſoil, or he may plant diligently and water faithfully with little fruit. The ſkilful labourer knows that even where the ſurface is not particularly promiſing, there is often a rough ſtrong ground which will amply repay the trouble of breaking it up; yet we are often moſt taken with a ſoft ſurface, though it conceal a ſhallow depth, becauſe it promiſes preſent reward and little trouble. But ſtrong and pertinacious tempers, of which perhaps obſtinacy is the leading vice, under ſkilful management often turn out ſteady and ſterling

who were both hands and eyes to an infirm and nearly blind father. It is but juſtice to repeat that theſe examples are not taken from that middle rank of life which Milton filled, but from the daughters of the higheſt officers in the ſtate.

characters ; while from softer clay a firm and vigorous virtue is but seldom produced. Pertinacity is a ten principle, which wants nothing but to be led to true object ; while the uniformly yielding, and universally accommodating spirit, is not seldom the result of a feeble tone of morals, of a temper eager for praise and acting for reward.

But these revolutions in character cannot be effected by mere education. Plutarch has observed that the medical science would never be brought to perfection till poisons should be converted into physic. Our late improvers in natural science have done in the medical world, by converting the most deadly ingredients into instruments of life and health, Christ with a sort of divine alchymy has effected in the moral world, by that transmutation which makes those passions which have been working for sin become active in the cause of religion. The violent temper of Saul of Tarsus, which was "exceedingly mad" against the will of God, did God see fit to convert into that benevolent zeal which enabled Paul the Apostle to labour and remit for the conversion of the Gentile world. Christianity indeed does not so much give us new affections or faculties, as give a new direction to those we already have. She changes that sorrowful world which worketh death into "godly sorrow which worketh repentance." She changes our anger against the persons we dislike into hatred of their sins. "that fear of man which worketh a snare," she transforms into "that fear of God which worketh salvation." That religion does not extinguish the passions, but alters their object, the animated expressions of the vivid Apostle confirm—"Yea, what *fearfulness* ; yea, what *clearing of yourselves* ; yea, what *indignation* ; yea, what *jealousy* ; yea, what *vehement desire* ; yea, what *yea, what revenge.*"*

Thus, by some of the most troublesome passions of our nature being converted by the blessing of God through religious education to the side of virtue, a double purpose is effected. Because, it is the character

tions never to observe a neutrality. If they are no longer rebels, they become auxiliaries ; and the accession of strength is doubled, because a foe subdued is easily obtained. For it is the effect of religion on the passions, that when she seizes the enemy's garrison, she does not content herself with defeating its future chiefs, she does not destroy the works, she does not burn the arsenal and spike the cannon ; but the artillery she seizes, she turns to her own use ; she attacks in her turn, and plants its whole force against the enemy from whom she has taken it.

But while I would deprecate harshness, I would enforce discipline ; and that not merely on the ground of religion, but of happiness also. One reason, not seldom brought forward by tender but mistaken mothers as an apology for their unbounded indulgence, especially to weakly children, is, that they probably will not live to enjoy the world when grown up, and that therefore they would not abridge the little pleasure they may enjoy at present, lest they should be taken out of the world without having tasted any of its delights. But a slight degree of observation would prove that this is an error in judgment as well as in principle. For, omitting any considerations respecting their future welfare, and entering only into their immediate interests ; it is an indisputable fact that children who grow up without control, whose faults encounter no contradiction, and whose humours experience constant indulgence, grow more irritable and capricious, invent wants, create desires, lose all relish for the pleasures which they grow up they may reckon upon ; and become perhaps more miserable than even those unfortunate children who labour under the more obvious and more commiseratable misfortunes of suffering under the tyranny of unkind parents.

An early habitual restraint is peculiarly important to the future character and happiness of women. A judicious, unrelaxing, but steady and gentle curb on their tempers and passions can alone ensure their peace and establish their principles. It is a habit which cannot be adopted too soon, nor persisted in too pertinaciously. They should when very young be enured

to contradiction. Instead of hearing their *bon mots* treasured up and repeated till the guests are tired, and till the children begin to think it dull, when they themselves are not the little heroines of the theme, they should be accustomed to receive but moderate praise for their vivacity or their wit, though they should receive just commendation for such qualities as have more worth than splendour.

Patience, diligence, quiet, and unfatigued perseverance, industry, regularity, and oeconomy of time, are these are the dispositions I would labour to excite, and these are the qualities I would warmly commend. So far from admiring genius, or extolling its prompt effusions, I would rather intimate that excellence, to a certain degree, is in the power of every competitor: that it is the vanity of over-valuing herself for supposed original powers, and slackening exertion in consequence of that vanity, which often leave the lively ignorant, and the witty superficial. A girl who overhears her mother tell the company that she is a genius and is so quick, that she never thinks of applying to her task till a few minutes before she is to be called to repeat it, will acquire such a confidence in her own abilities, that she will be advancing in conceit as she falls short in knowledge. Whereas, if she were made to suspect that her want of application rather indicated a deficiency than a superiority in her understanding, she would become industrious in proportion as she became modest; and by thus adding the diligence of the humble to the talents of the ingenious she might really attain a degree of excellence, which mere quickness of parts, too lazy, because too proud to apply, seldom attains.

Girls should be led to distrust their own judgment; they should learn not to murmur at expostulation; they should be accustomed to expect and to endure opposition. It is a lesson with which the world will not fail to furnish them; and they will not practise the worse for having learnt it the sooner. It is of the last importance to their happiness, even in this life, that they should early acquire a submissive temper and a forbearing spirit. They must even endure to be

right wrong sometimes, when they cannot but feel are right. And while they should be anxiously engaged to do well, they must not expect always to receive the praise of having done so. But while a gentlemanly and genteel behaviour is inculcated, let them not be instructed to affect gentleness merely on the low ground of its being decorous, and feminine, and pleasing, and calculated to attract human favour: but let them be properly taught to cultivate it on the high principle of obedience to Christ; on the practical ground of looking after conformity to Him, who, when he proposed himself as a perfect pattern of imitation, did not say, "Learn of me, for I am great, or wise, or mighty," but "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly:" and he graciously promised that the reward should accompany the practice, by encouragingly adding "and ye shall find rest to your souls." Do not teach them to look for the reward on the ordinary ground that vanity is unamiable, and that no one will love them if they are proud; but let that will only go to correct the exterior, and make them soft and smiling hypocrites. But inform them, "God resisteth the proud," while "them that are meek he shall guide in judgment, and such as are humble, them shall he teach his way." In these, as in other cases, an habitual attention to the motives should be carefully substituted in their young hearts, in the place of too much anxiety, about the event of success. Principles, aims, and intentions should be constantly insisted on, as the only true ground of right conduct, and they should be carefully guarded against too much solicitude for that human praise which attaches to appearances as much as to realities, to success rather than to desert.

Let me repeat, without incurring the censure of pedantry, that it will be of vast importance not to let the earliest occasions of working gentle manners rest on their only true foundation, Christianity. For this purpose I would again urge your attention to the example of our Redeemer in all his sayings and doings. Endeavour to make your pupil feel that all the wonders exhibited in his life do not so overwhelm a awakened heart with rapture, love, and astonishment.

ment, as the perpetual instances of his humility and meekness, with which the Gospel abounds. Stupendous miracles, exercises of infinite power prompted by infinite mercy, are actions which we should naturally enough conceive as growing out of omnipotence and divine perfection: but silence under cruel mockings, patience under reproach, gentleness of demeanor under unparalleled injuries; these are perfections of which unassisted nature not only has no conception in a Divine Being, but at which it would revolt, had not the reality been exemplified by our perfect pattern. Healing the sick, feeding the multitude, restoring the blind, raising the dead, are deeds of which we could form some adequate idea, as necessarily flowing from Almighty goodness: but to wash his disciples' feet—to preach the Gospel to the *poor*—to renounce not only ease, for what heroes have done on human motives—but to renounce praise, to forgive his persecutors, to love his enemies, to pray for his murderers with his last breath—these are things which, while they compel us to cry out with the Centurion, "Truly this was the *"Son of God,"* should remind us also, that they are not only *adorable* but *inimitable* parts of his character. These are not speculative and barren doctrines which he came to preach to Christians, but living duties which he meant to entail on them; symbols of their profession; tests of their discipleship. These are perfections which we are not barely to contemplate with holy awe and distant admiration, as if they were restricted to the *divine* nature of our Redeemer; but we must consider them as suited to the human nature also, which he condescended to participate. In *contemplating*, we must *imitate*; in admiring, we must *praise*; and in our measure and degree go and do likewise. Elevate your thoughts for one moment to this standard, (and you never should allow yourself to be contented with a lower,) and then go, if you can, and teach your children to be mild, and soft, and gentle on worldly grounds, on human motives, as an external attraction, as a decoration to their sex, as an appendage to their rank, as an expression of their good breeding.

There is a custom among teachers, which is not the more right for being common ; they are apt to bestow an undue proportion of pains on children of the best capacity, as if only geniuses were worthy of attention. They should reflect that in moderate talents, carefully cultivated, we are perhaps to look for the chief happiness and virtue of society. If superlative genius had been generally necessary, its existence would not have been so rare ; for Omnipotence could easily have made those talents common, which we now consider as extraordinary, had they been necessary to the perfection of his plan. Besides, while we are conscientiously instructing children of moderate capacity, it is a comfort to reflect, that if no labour will raise them to a high degree in the scale of intellectual distinction, yet they may be led on to perfection in that road in which "a way-faring man, though simple, shall not err." And when a mother feels disposed to repine that her family is not likely to exhibit a groupe of future wits and growing beauties, let her console herself by looking abroad into the world, where she will quickly perceive that the monopoly of happiness is not engrossed by beauty, nor that of virtue by genius.

Perhaps mediocrity of parts was decreed to be the ordinary lot, by way of furnishing a stimulus to industry, and strengthening the motives to virtuous application. For is it not obvious that moderate abilities, carefully carried to that measure of perfection of which they are capable often enables their possessors to outstrip, in the race of knowledge and of usefulness, their more brilliant but less persevering competitors ? It is with mental endowments, as with other rich gifts of Providence ; the inhabitant of the luxuriant southern clime, where Nature has done every thing, in the way of vegetation, indolently lays hold on this very plea of fertility which should animate his exertions, as a reason for doing nothing himself ; so that the soil which teems with such encouraging abundance leaves the favoured possessor idle, and comparatively poor : while the native of the less genial region, supplying by his labours the deficiencies of his lot, overtakes him.

more favoured competitor; by substituting industry for opulence, he improves the riches of his native land beyond that which is blessed with warmer suns, and thus vindicates Providence from the charge of partial distribution.

A girl who has docility will seldom be found to want understanding sufficient for all the purposes of an useful, a happy and a pious life. And it is as wrong for parents to set out with too sanguine a dependence on the figure their children are to make in life, as it is unreasonable to be discouraged at every disappointment. Want of success is so far from furnishing a motive for relaxing their energy, that it is a reason for redoubling it. Let them suspect their own plans, and reform them; let them distrust their own principles, and correct them. The generality of parents do too little; some do much, and miss their reward, because they look not to any strength beyond their own: after much is done, much will remain undone; for the entire regulation of the heart and affections is not the work of education alone, but is effected by the operation of divine grace. Will it be accounted enthusiasm to suggest, "that the fervent effectual prayer of a righteous parent availeth much?" and to observe that perhaps the reason why so many anxious mothers fail of success is, because they repose with confidence in their own skill and labour, neglecting to look to HIM without whose blessing they do but labour in vain?

On the other hand, is it not to be feared that some pious parents have fallen into an error of an opposite kind? From a full conviction that human endeavours are vain, and that it is God alone who can change the heart, they are earnest in their prayers, but not so earnest in their endeavours. Such parents should be reminded that if they do not add their exertions to their prayers, their children are not likely to be more benefited than the children of those who do not add their prayers to their exertions. What God has joined, let not man presume to separate. It is the work of God, we readily acknowledge, to implant religion in the heart, and to maintain it there as a ruling principle of

conduct. And is it not the same God which causes the corn to grow ? Are not our natural lives constantly preserved by his power ? Who will deny that in him we live, and move, and have our being ? But how are these works of God carried on ? By *means* which he has appointed. By the labour of the husbandman the corn is made to grow : by food the body is sustained : and by religious instruction God is pleased to work upon the human heart. But unless we diligently plow, and sow, and weed, and manure, have we any right to depend on the refreshing showers and ripening suns of heaven for the blessing of an abundant harvest ? As far as *we* see of the ways of God, all his works are carried on by *means*. It becomes therefore our duty to use the means, and trust in God ; to remember that God will not work without the means ; and that the means can effect nothing without his blessing. “ Paul “ may plant and Apollos water, but it is God must “ give the increase.” But to what does he give the increase ? To the *exertions* of Paul and Apollos. It is never said, because God only can give the increase, that Paul and Apollos may spare their labour.

It is one grand object to give the young probationer just and sober views of the world on which she is about to enter. Instead of making her bosom bound at the near prospect of emancipation from her instructors ; instead of teaching her young heart to dance with premature flutterings as the critical winter draws near in which *she is to come out* ; instead of raising a tumult in her busy imagination at the approach of her first *grown up ball*, an event held out as forming the first grand epocha of female life, as the period from which a fresh computation, fixing the pleasures and independence of womanhood, is to be dated ; instead of this, endeavour to convince her, that the world will not turn out to be that scene of unvarying and never-ending delights which she has perhaps been led to expect, not only from the sanguine temper and warm spirits natural to youth, but from the value she has seen put on those showy accomplishments which have too probably been fitting her for her exhibition in life. Teach her that this world is not a stage for the display of superficial or

even of shining talents, but for the strict and sober exercise of fortitude, temperance, meekness, faith, diligence, and self-denial; of her due performance of which Christian graces, Angels will be spectators, and God the judge. Teach her that human life is not a splendid romance, spangled over with brilliant adventures, and enriched with extraordinary occurrences, and diversified with wonderful incidents; lead her not to expect that it will abound with scenes which will call extraordinary qualities and wonderful powers into perpetual action; and for which if she acquit herself well she will be rewarded with proportionate fame and certain commendation. But apprise her that human life is a true history, many passages of which will be dull, obscure, and uninteresting; some perhaps tragical; but that whatever gay incidents and pleasing scenes may be interspersed in the progress of the piece, yet finally "one event happeneth to all;" to all there is one awful and infallible catastrophe. Apprise her that the estimation which mankind form of merit is not always just, nor is its praise very exactly proportioned to desert; tell her that the world weighs actions in far different scales from "the balance of the sanctuary," and estimates worth by a far different standard from that of the gospel. Apprise her that while her purest intentions may be sometimes calumniated, and her best actions misrepresented, she will, on the other hand, be liable to receive commendation on occasions wherein her conscience will tell her she has not deserved it; and that she may be extolled by others for actions, for which if she be honest, she will condemn in herself.

Do not however give her a gloomy and discouraging picture of the world, but rather seek to give her a just and sober view of the part she will have to act in it. And restrain the impetuosity of hope, and cool the ardour of expectation, by explaining to her, that this part, even in her best estate, will probably consist in a succession of petty trials, and a round of quiet duties which, if well performed, though they will make little or no figure in the book of fame, will prove of vast importance to her in that day when *another* "book is opened, and the judgment is set, and every one will

judged according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad."

Why not that these just and sober views will cruelly crush her young hopes, blast her budding prospects, leaden the innocent satisfactions of life. It is not

There is, happily, an active spring in the mind of youth which bounds with fresh vigour and unimpaired elasticity from any such temporary depression.

It is not meant that you should darken her prospect, such as that you should enlighten the eyes of her understanding to contemplate it. And though her senses, tastes, and passions, will all be against you, if you set before her a faithful delineation of life, yet it will be something to get her judgment on your side.

It is no unkind office to assist the short view of youth with the aids of long-sighted experience; to enable her to discover spots in the brightness of that world which dazzles them in prospect, though it is probable she will after all choose to believe their own eyes rather than the offered glass.

CHAP. VIII.

Female Study, and Initiation into Knowledge.—Error of diverting the Imagination to the neglect of the Judgment.—Books of Reasoning recommended.

IN this little work by no means assumes the character of a general scheme of education, the author has purposely avoided expatiating largely on any kind of instruction, but as it happens to be connected, either mediately or remotely, with objects of a moral or religious nature. Of course she has been so far from making it necessary to enter into the enumeration of the popular books which are used in general instruction, that she has purposely forbore to mention any. Though such books the rising generation is far more copiously and ably furnished than any that has preceded, and out of an excellent variety the judicious instructor can hardly fail to make such a selection as will be beneficial to the pupil.

sides that exertion may slacken for want of a stimulus, there not be a moral disadvantage in possessing persons with the notion that learning may be without diligence, and knowledge be attained without labour? Sound education never *can* be made a "rose path of dalliance." Do what we will not *cheat* children into learning, or *play* for knowledge, according to the conciliating spirit of the modern creed, and the selfish indolence of modern habits. There is no idle way to any acquisition which really deserve the name. And as Euclid used to impress the impetuous vanity of great men with his Sovereign that there was no royal way to geometry; so the fond mother may be assured that there is no short cut to any other kind of learning; no alleged bye-path cleared from the thorns and repulse and difficulty, for the accommodation of the indolent inactivity or feminine weakness. The more knowledge, as a punishment, perhaps, for it has been at first unfairly tasted, cannot now be obtained without difficulty; and this very circumstance afterwards to furnish not only literary pleasure

initiation into that life of trial to which we are initiated on our entrance into this world. It is the breaking-in to that state of toil and labour to which we are born, and to which sin has made us liable; and in this view of the subject the pains taken in acquisition of learning may be converted to higher than such as are purely literary.

Will it not be ascribed to a captious singularity, if I venture to remark, that real knowledge and real piety, though they may have gained in many instances, have suffered in others from that profusion of little, amusing, sentimental books with which the youthful library is now so much increased? Abundance has its dangers as well as scarcity.

In the first place, may not the multiplicity of these alluring little works increase the natural reluctance to those more dry and uninteresting studies, of which after all, the rudiments of every part of learning consist? And secondly, is there not some danger (though there are many honourable exceptions) that some of those engaging narratives may serve to infuse into the youthful heart a sort of spurious goodness, a pretence of virtue, a parade of charity? And that benevolent actions with the recital of which they are so often accompanied, when they are not made to flow from any other source but feeling, may tend to inspire a self-complacency, a self-gratulation, a "stand by, for I am holier than thou?" May not the success with which the good deeds of the little heroes are uniformly crowned, the invariable reward which is made the instant concomitant of well-doing, furnish the young reader with false views of the condition of life, and the nature of the divine dealings with men? May they not help to suggest a false standard of morals, to infuse a love of popularity and an anxiety for praise, in the place of that simple and unostentatious rule of doing what is good we do, *because it is the will of God*? The universal substitution of this principle would tend to pervert the worldly morality of many a popular little story. There are few dangers which good parents will so carefully guard against as that of giving their children a mere political piety; that sort of religion

There is a certain precocity of mind which
helped on by these superficial modes of inst
for frivolous reading will produce its correspo
fect, in much less time than books of solid inst
the imagination being liable to be worked up
the feelings to be set a-going, much faster than
derstanding can be opened, and the judgment
ened. A talent for conversation should be th
of instruction, not its precursor; it is a gold
when suffered to ripen gradually on the tree of
edge; but if forced on the hot-bed of a cir
library, it will turn out worthless and vapid in
tion as it was artificial and premature. Gi
have been accustomed to devour a multitude
lous books, will converse and write with a fas
appearance of skill as to style and sentiment a
or fourteen years old, than those of a more a
age who are under the discipline of severer
but the former having early attained to that lo
ard which had been held out to them, become
ry; while the latter, quietly progressive, are
through just gradations to a higher strain o
and those who early begin with talking and
like women, commonly end with thinking an
like children.

I would not however prohibit such works o

the affected moral stories which are not grounded on christian principle. I should suggest the use on the one hand of original and acknowledged fictions; and on the other, of accurate and simple facts; so that truth and fable may ever be kept separate and distinct in the mind. There is something that kindles fancy, quickens genius, and excites new ideas in many of the bold fictions of the East. And there is one peculiar merit in the Arabian and some other oriental fables, which is, that they exhibit striking and in many respects faithful views of the manners, habits, customs, and religion of their respective countries; so that a tincture of real local information is acquired by perusal of the wildest fable, which will not be without its uses in aiding the future associations of the mind with that which relates to Eastern history and literature.

The irregular fancy of women is not sufficiently tamed by early application, nor tamed by labour, the kind of knowledge they commonly acquire is easily attained; and being chiefly some slight acquisition of the memory, something which is given them to get off by themselves, and not grounded in their minds by comment and conversation, it is easily forgotten.

The superficial *question-and-answer*-way, for instance, in which they often learn history, furnishes them with little to lean on: the events being detached and separated, the actions having no links to unite them with each other; the characters not being involved by mutual relation; the chronology being reduced to disconnected dates, instead of presenting an unbroken series; of course, neither events, actions, characters, nor chronology, fasten themselves on the understanding, but rather float in the memory as so many detached episodes, than contribute to form the mind and to enrich the judgment of the reader, in the important science of men and manners.

The swarms of *Abridgments*, *Beauties*, and *Compendiums*, which form too considerable a part of a young lady's library, may be considered in many instances as an infallible receipt for making a superficial mind. The names of the renowned characters in history thus become familiar in the mouths of those who can neither

discordant materials, while they inflame you
ers with the vanity of reciting, neither fill t
nor form the taste: and it is not difficult to tr
to their shallow sources the hacknied quota
certain *accomplished* young ladies, who will be f
ly found not to have come legitimately by a
they know: I mean, not to have drawn it
true spring, the original works of the auth
which some *beautymonger* has severed it. Hu
consistency in this, as in other cases, wants to
two irreconcilable things; it strives to unite
utation of knowledge with the pleasures of
forgetting that nothing that is valuable can be
ed without sacrifices, and that if we would
knowledge we must pay for it the fair and law
of time and industry. For this extract-readin
it accommodates itself to the convenience, if
the character of the age in which we live.
pretite for pleasure, and that love of ease and in
which is generated by it, leave little time or
found improvement; while the vanity, which i
ly a characteristic of the existing period, pu
claim also for indulgence, and contrives to figu
by these little snatches of reading, caught in t
intervals of successive amusements.

Besides, the taste, thus hampered with

and uninteresting parts of his work, that the judicious poet commonly reserves those flowers, whose beauty is defaced when they are plucked from the garland into which he had so skilfully woven them.

The remark, however, is by no means of general application; there are many valuable works which from their bulk would be almost inaccessible to a great number of readers, and a considerable part of which may not be generally useful. Even in the best written books there is often superfluous matter; authors are apt to get enamoured of their subject, and to dwell too long on it: every person cannot find time to read a long work on any subject, and yet it may be well for them to know something on almost every subject; those, therefore, who abridge voluminous works judiciously, render service to the community. But there seems, if I may venture the remark, to be a mistake in the use of abridgments. They are put systematically into the hands of youth, who have, or ought to have, leisure for the works at large; while abridgments seem more immediately calculated for persons in more advanced life, who wish to recall something they had forgotten; who want to restore old ideas rather than acquire new ones; or they are useful for persons immersed in the business of the world, who have little leisure for voluminous reading. They are excellent to refresh the mind, but not competent to form it.

Perhaps there is some analogy between the mental and bodily conformation of women. The instructor therefore should imitate the physician. If the latter prescribe bracing medicines for a body of which delicacy is the disease, the former would do well to prohibit relaxing reading for a mind which is already of too soft a texture, and should strengthen its feeble tone by invigorating reading.

By softness, I cannot be supposed to mean imbecility of understanding, but natural softness of heart, together with that indolence of spirit which is fostered by indulging in seducing books, and in the general habits of fashionable life.

I mean not here to recommend books which are im-

mediately religious, but such as exercise the reasoning faculties, teach the mind to get acquainted with its own nature, and to stir up its own powers. Let not a timid young lady start if I should venture to recommend to her, after a proper course of preparation, to swallow and digest such strong meats as Watts's or Duncan's little book of Logic; some parts of Mr. Lock's Essay on the Human Understanding; and Bishop Butler's Analogy. Where there is leisure, and capacity, and an able friend to comment and to counsel, works of this nature might be profitably substituted in the place of so much English Sentiment, French Philosophy, Italian Love Songs, and fantastic German imagery and magic wonders. While such enervating or absurd books sadly disqualify the reader for solid pursuit or vigorous thinking, the studies here recommended would act upon the constitution of the mind as a kind of alterative, and if I may be allowed the expression, would help to brace the intellectual stamina.

This is however by no means intended to exclude works of taste and imagination, which must always make the ornamental part, and of course a very considerable part, of female studies. It is only suggested, that they should not form them entirely and exclusively. For what is called dry tough reading, independent of the knowledge it conveys, is useful as a habit, and wholesome as an exercise. Serious study serves to harden the mind for more trying conflicts; it lifts the reader from sensation to intellect; it abstracts her from the world and its vanities; it fixes a wandering spirit, and fortifies a weak one; it divorces her from matter; it corrects that spirit of trifling which she naturally contracts from the frivolous turn of female conversation, and the petty nature of female employments; it concentrates her attention, assists her in a habit of excluding trivial thoughts, and thus even helps to qualify her for religious pursuits. Yes, I repeat it, there is to woman a Christian use to be made of sober studies; while books of an opposite cast, however unexceptionable they may be sometimes found in point of expression, however free from evil in its more gross and palpable shapes, yet by their very nature and

tion they excite a spirit of relaxation, by exciting scenes and ideas which soften the mind and set fancy at work ; they impair its general powers of discernment, and at best feed habits of improper indulgence, and nourish a vain and visionary indolence, which lays the mind open to error, and the heart to delusion.

Women are little accustomed to close reasoning on any subject ; still less do they inure their minds to consider particular parts of a subject ; they are not trained to turn a truth round, and view it in all its different aspects and positions ; and this perhaps is one of the chief causes (as will be observed in another* place) of the too great confidence they are disposed to place in their opinions. Though their imagination is already over-extended, and their judgment naturally incorrect ; in training them we go on to stimulate the imagination, and we neglect the regulation of the judgment. The mind already wants ballast, and we make their education consist in continually crowding more sail than can carry. Their intellectual powers being so weak, and strengthened by exercise, makes every little business appear a hardship to them : whereas serious study would be useful, were it only that it leads the mind to the habit of conquering difficulties. But it is peculiarly hard to turn at once from the indolent repose of idle reading, from the concerns of mere animal life, from the objects of sense, or the frivolousness of chit-chat ; it is peculiarly hard, I say, to a mind so softened, to rescue itself from the dominion of self-indulgence, to resume its powers, to call home its scattered strength, to shut out every foreign intrusion, to force a spring so unnaturally bent, and to devote itself to religious reading, to active business, to reflection, to self-examination : whereas to an intellect accustomed to think at all, the difficulty of thinking seriously is only lessened.

It were not for me to desire to make scholastic ladies, or male dialecticians ; but there is little fear that the use of books here recommended, if thoroughly studied,

* Chapter on Conversation.

be elated with her literary acquisitions, check her
ity by calling to mind the just remark of Swift, "
"after all her boasted acquirements, a woman
"generally speaking, be found to possess less of
"is called learning than a common school-boy."

Neither is there any fear that this sort of re-
will convert ladies into authors. The direct con-
effect will be likely to be produced by the perusal
writers who throw the generality of readers at so
unapproachable distance as to check presumption
stead of exciting it. Who are those ever multiplying
authors, that with unparalleled fecundity are over-
ing the world with their quick-succeeding prod-
They are novel-writers; the easiness of whose
ductions is at once the cause of their own fruitfulness
and of the almost infinitely numerous race of imitators
to whom they give birth. Such is the frightful fascina-
of this species of composition, that every raw
while she reads, is tempted to fancy that she can
write. And as Alexander, on perusing the Iliad,
found by congenial sympathy the image of Achilles in
his own ardent soul, and felt himself the hero he
studying; and as Corregio, on first beholding a picture
which exhibited the perfection of the Greek
art, prophetically felt all his own future greatness
cried out in rapture, "And I too am a painter."

All every fresh production, like the progeny of Bantano, is followed by

Another, and another, and another ! *

Is a lady, however destitute of talents, education, or knowledge of the world, whose studies have been completed by a circulating library, in any distress of mind ? The writing a novel suggests itself as the best soother of her sorrows ! Does she labour under any depression of circumstances ? Writing a novel occurs as the readiest receipt for mending them ! And she solaces herself with the conviction that the subscription which has been given to her importunity or her necessities, has been offered as an homage to her genius. And this confidence instantly levies a fresh contribution for a succeeding work. Capacity and cultivation are so little taken into the account, that writing a book seems to be now considered as the only sure resource which the idle and illiterate have always in their power.

May the Author be indulged in a short digression while she remarks, though rather out of its place, that the corruption occasioned by these books has spread so wide, and descended so low, that not only among milliners, mantua-makers, and other trades, where numbers work together, the labour of one girl is frequently sacrificed that she may be spared to read those mischievous books to the others ; but she has been assured by clergymen, who have witnessed the fact, that they are procured and greedily read in the wards of our Hospitals ! an awful hint, that those who teach the poor to read, should not only take care to furnish them with principles which will lead them to abhor corrupt books, but should also furnish them with such books as shall strengthen and confirm their principles.† And

* It is surely not necessary to state, that no disrespect can be here intended to those females of real genius and correct character, some of whose justly admired writings in this kind are accurate histories of life and manners, and striking delineations of character. It is not *their* fault if their works have been attended with the consequences which usually attend good originals, that of giving birth to a multitude of miserable imitations.

† The above facts furnish no argument on the side of those who would keep the poor in ignorance. Those who cannot *read* can *hear*, and are likely to hear to worse purpose than those who have been better

which he prays ; for to pray that these may be promoted, without contributing to them by our exertions, our money, and our influence, is a palpable inconsistency !

CHAP. IX.

On the Religious and Moral Use of History and Geography.

WHILE every sort of useful knowledge is carefully imparted to young persons, it should be imparted not merely for its own sake, but also for the sake of its subserviency to higher things. All learning should be taught, not as an end, but as a means, and in this view even a lesson of history or geography may be converted into a lesson of religion. In the study of history, the instructor will accustom the scholar not merely to store her memory with facts and dates, and to ascertain dates and epochs ; but she will accustom her also to trace effects to their causes, to examine the secret springs of human action, and to observe the

the study of history may serve to give a clearer insight into the corruption of human nature :

may help to shew the *plan* of Providence in the succession of events, and in the use of unworthy instruments :

may assist in the *vindication* of Providence, in the non failure of virtue, and the frequent success of

may lead to a distrust of our own judgment :

may contribute to our improvement in self-know-

It to prove to the pupil the important doctrine of human corruption from the study of history, will require a truly Christian commentator in the friend with whom the work is perused. For from the low standard of Right established by the generality of historians, erect so many persons into good characters who are far from the true idea of Christian virtue, the unassisted reader will be liable to form very imperfect conceptions of what is real goodness ; and will conclude, as the author sometimes does, that the true idea of human nature is to be taken from the medium between his best and his worst characters ; without acquiring a just notion of that prevalence of evil, which, in spite of a few brighter luminaries that here and there serve to gild the gloom of history, tends abundantly to establish the doctrine. It will indeed be gradually establishing itself by those who, in perusing the history of mankind, carefully mark the rise and progress of sin, from the first timid irruption of evil thought, to the fearless accomplishment of the aggravated crime in which that thought has ended : the indignant question, "Is thy servant a dog

mediately analogous to my subject,) that there is one disadvantage attends the common practice of setting young ladies to read antiquity in history and geography in French or Italian, who have not been usually well grounded in the pronunciation of classical names of persons and places in our own language. The foreign terminations of Greek and Roman names are often very different from the English, and where they are first acquired are frequently retained and adopted in the French, so as to give an illiterate appearance to the conversation of women who are not really ignorant. And this defective pronunciation is the more to be guarded against in the education of ladies who are taught *quantity* as boys are.

too implicit belief in the flattering accounts which voyage-writers are fond of exhibiting of the amiableness, and benignity of some of the newly discovered by our circumnavigators ; they should learn to suspect the superior goodness to the Hindoos, and particularly the account of the inhabitants of the Pelew Islands ? These last have been represented as having almost escaped the universal taint of our common nature, and seem by their purity to have sprung from an ancestor than Adam.

We cannot forbear suspecting that these but somewhat overcharged portraits of man, in a natural state, are drawn with the invidious design of counteracting the doctrine of human corruption, and degrade the value and even destroy the necessity of Christian sacrifice ; by insinuating that uncorrupted man is so disposed to rectitude as to supersede the occasion for that redemption which is professedly necessary for sinners. That in countries professing Christianity many are not Christians, will be too readily admitted. Yet to say nothing of the vast superiority of goodness in the lives of those who are really governed by Christianity, is there not something even in her reflection which guides to greater purity many of those who do not profess to walk by it : I doubt much if a

he religious reader of general history will observe the controlling hand of Providence in the direction of its events; in turning the most unworthy actions and intentions to the accomplishment of his own purposes. He will mark infinite wisdom directing what appears to be casual occurrences, to the completion of his own plan. She will point out how causes seemingly the most disconnected; events seemingly the most unpromising, circumstances seemingly the most incongruous, are all linked together for some final good. She will mark how national as well as individual crimes are often ruled to some hidden purpose far different from the intention of the actors: how Omnipotence can, often does bring about the best purposes by the worst instruments: how the bloody and unjust con-
cor is but "the rod of his wrath," to punish or to
fy his offending children: how "the fury of the
oppressor," and the sufferings of the oppressed, will
day, when the whole scheme shall be unfolded,
licate His righteous dealings. She will explain to
less enlightened reader, how Infinite Wisdom of-
fends the insignificance of human greatness, and
shallowness of human ability, by setting aside in-
struments the most powerful and promising, while He
ks by agents comparatively contemptible. But she
carefully guard this doctrine of Divine Providence,
working out his own purposes through the sins
his creatures, and by the instrumentality of the
ked by calling to mind, while the offender is but a
in the hands of the great Artificer, "the woe de-
ounced against him by whom the offence cometh!"
will explain how those mutations and revolutions
takes which appear to us so unaccountable, and
those operations of Providence which seem to us
ntangled and complicated, all move harmoniously
in perfect order: that there is not an event but
its commission; not a misfortune which breaks its
tted rank; not a trial which moves out of its ap-
ted track. While calamities and crimes seem to
n casual confusion, all is commanded or permitted;
s under the control of a wisdom which cannot err,
goodness which cannot do wrong.

To explain my meaning by a few instances. When the spirit of the youthful reader rises into honest indignation at that hypocritical piety which divorced an unoffending Queen to make way for the lawful crime of our Eighth Henry's marriage with Ann Boleyn; and when that indignation is increased by the more open profligacy which brought about the execution of the latter; the instructor will not lose so fair an occasion for unfolding how in the councils of the Most High the crimes of the King were overruled to the happiness of the country; and how, to this inauspicious marriage, from which the heroic Elizabeth sprang, the Protestant religion owed its firm stability. This view of the subject will lead the reader to justify the Providence of God without diminishing her abhorrence of the vices of the tyrant.

She will explain to her, how even the conquests of ambition, after having deluged a land with blood, involved the perpetrator in guilt, and the innocent victim in the ruin, may yet be made the instrument of opening to future generations the way to commerce, to civilization, to Christianity. She may remind her, as they are following Cæsar in his invasion of Britain, that whereas the conqueror fancied he was only gratifying his own inordinate ambition, extending the flight of the Roman Eagle, immortalizing his own name, and proving that "this world was made for Cæsar;" he was in reality becoming the effectual though unconscious instrument of leading a land of barbarians to civilization and to science: and was in fact preparing an island of Pagans to embrace the religion of Christ. She will inform her, that when afterwards the victorious country of the same Cæsar had made Judea a Roman province, and the Jews had become its tributaries, the Romans did not know, nor did the indignant Jews suspect, that this circumstance was operating to the confirmation of an event the most important the world ever witnessed.

For when, "Augustus sent forth a decree that all the world should be taxed;" he vainly thought he was only enlarging his own imperial power; whereas he was acting in unconscious subservience to the decree

higher Sovereign, and was helping to ascertain public act the exact period of Christ's birth, and giving a record of his extraction from that family in which it was predicted by a long line of Prophets he should spring. Herod's atrocious murder of innocents has added an additional circumstance for confirmation of *our* faith ; the incredulity of Thomas strengthened our belief ; nay, the treachery of Judas, and the injustice of Pilate, were the humaniments employed for the salvation of the world. The youth that is not thoroughly armed with Christian principles, will be tempted to mutiny not only against the justice, but the very existence of a superintending Providence, in contemplating those frequent vicissitudes which occur in history of the ill success of the more virtuous cause, and the prosperity of the wicked. He will see with astonishment that it is Rome which triumphs, while Carthage, which had clearly a better cause, falls. Now and then indeed a Cicerone prevails, and a Cataline is subdued : but often, it is war successful against the somewhat juster pretensions of Pompey, and against the still clearer cause of liberty. It is Octavius who triumphs, and it is over Brutus that he triumphs : It is Tiberius who is dethroned, and the Germanicus falls !

Thus his faith in a righteous Providence at first is staggered, and he is ready to say, " Surely it is not God that governs the earth !" But on a fuller consideration, (and here the suggestions of a Christian instructor are peculiarly wanted,) there will appear a wisdom in this very confusion of vice and virtue ; it is calculated to send our thoughts forward to a day of retribution, the principle of retribution being so imperfectly established in this. It is indeed so common for virtue to have the advantage here, in point of happiness at least, though not of glory, that the course of Providence is still calculated to prove God is on the side of virtue ; but still virtue is so often unsuccessful, that clearly the God of virtue, in order that his work may be perfect, must have in view a world of retribution. This confused state of things therefore is just that state which is most of all

calculated to confirm the deeply considerate mind the belief of a future state : for if all here were even very nearly so, should we not say, " Justice is ready satisfied, and there *needs* no other world." On the other hand, if vice always triumphed, should we not then be ready to argue in favour of vice, rather than virtue, and to *rough* for no other world ?

It seems so very important to ground young persons in the belief that they will not inevitably meet in this world with reward and success according to their merit, and to habituate them to expect even the most virtuous attempts to be often, though not always disappointed, that I am in danger of tautology on this point. This fact is precisely what history teaches. The truth should be plainly told to the young reader ; and the antidote to that evil, which mistaken and worldly people would expect to arise from divulging this disencouraging doctrine is *faith*. The importance of this therefore, and the necessity of it to real, unbending and persevering virtue, is surely made plain by profane history itself. For the same thing which happens to states and kings, happens to private life and to individuals. Thus there is scarcely a page even of Pagan History, which may not be made instrumental to the establishing of the truth of revelation : and it is only by such a guarded mode of instruction that some of the evils attending on the study of ancient literature can be obviated.

Distrust and diffidence in our own judgment seem to be also an important instruction to be learnt from history. How contrary to all expectation do the events therein recorded commonly turn out ! How continually is the most sagacious conjecture of human penetration baffled ! and yet we proceed to foretell consequence, and to predict that event from the appearance of things under our own observation, with the same arrogant certainty as if we had never been warned by the monitory annals of successive ages.

There is scarcely one great event in history which does not, in the issue, produce effects upon which man foresight could never have calculated. The success of Augustus against his country produced pe-

in many distant provinces, which thus ceased to be harassed and tormented by this oppressive Republic. Could this effect have been foreseen it might have softened the despair of Cato, and checked the vehemence of Brutus. In politics, in short in every thing except in morals and religion, all is, to a considerable degree, uncertain. This reasoning is not meant to show that Cato ought not to have *fought*, but that he ought not to have *despended* even after the last battle ; and certainly even upon his own principles, ought not to have killed himself. It would be departing too much from my object to apply this argument, however obvious the application, against those who were driven to unreasonable distrust and despair by the late successes of a neighboring nation.

But all knowledge will be comparatively of little value, if we neglect self-knowledge ; and of self-knowledge history and biography may be made successful vehicles. It will be to little purpose that our pupils become accurate critics on the characters of others, while they remain ignorant of themselves ; for while to those who exercise an habit of self-application, a book of profane history may be made an instrument of improvement in this difficult science ; so without such an habit the Bible itself may, in this view, be read with little profit.

It will be to no purpose that the reader weeps over the fortitude of the Christian hero, or the constancy of the martyr, if she do not bear in mind that she herself is called to endure her own common trials with something of the same temper : If she do not bear in mind that, to control irregular humours, and to submit to the daily vexations of life, will require, though in a lower degree, the exertion of the same principle, and supplication for the aid of the same spirit which sustained the Christian hero in the trying conflicts of life, or the martyr in his agony at the stake.

May I be permitted to suggest a few instances, by way of specimen, how both sacred and common history may tend to promote self-knowledge ? And let me again remind the warm admirer of suffering piety na-

der *extraordinary trials*, that if she now fail in the petty occasions to which she is actually called out, she would not be likely to have stood in those more trying occasions which excite her admiration.

While she is applauding the self-denying saint who renounced his ease, or chose to embrace death, rather than violate his duty, let her ask herself if she has never refused to submit to the paltry inconvenience of giving up her company, or even altering her dinner-hour on Sunday, though by this trifling sacrifice her family might have been enabled to attend the public worship in the afternoon.

While she reads with horror that Belsazzar was rioting with his thousand nobles at the very moment when the Persian army was bursting through the brazen gates of Babylon; is she very sure that she herself in an almost equally imminent moment of public danger, has not been nightly indulging in every species of dissipation?

When she is deploring the inconsistency of the human heart; while she contrasts in Mark Anthony his bravery and contempt of ease at one period, with his licentious indulgences at another; or while she laments over the intrepid soul of Cæsar, whom she had been following in his painful marches, or admiring in his contempt of death, now dissolved in dissolute pleasures with the ensnaring Queen of Egypt; let her examine whether she herself has never, though in a much lower degree, evinced something of the same inconsistency? Whether she who lives perhaps an orderly, sober, and reasonable life during her summer residence in the country, does not plunge with little scruple in the winter into all the most extravagant pleasures of the capital? Whether she never carries about with her an accommodating kind of religion, which can be made to bend to places and seasons, to climates and customs, to times and circumstances; which takes its tincture from the fashion without, and not its habits from the principle within; which is decent with the pious, sober with the orderly, and loose with the licentious?

While she is admiring the generosity of Alexander in giving away kingdoms and provinces, let her, in

to ascertain whether she could imitate this magnanimity, take heed if she herself is daily seizing all the occasions of doing good, which every day presents to the affluent? Her call is not to sacrifice a province; does she sacrifice an opera ticket? She who is not doing all the good she can under her present circumstances, would not do all she foresees she should, in ordinary ones, were her power enlarged to the extent of her wishes.

While she is inveighing with patriotic indignation, in a neighboring metropolis thirty theatres were every night in time of war and public calamity, it is very clear that in a metropolis which contains three, she was not almost constantly at one of them in time of war and public calamity also? For though in a national view it may make a wide difference whether there be in the capital three theatres, or only, yet, as the same person can only go to one of them at once, it makes but little difference as to the amount of dissipation in the individual. She who rejoices at successful virtue in a history, or at the profanity of a person whose interests do not interfere with her own, may exercise her self-knowledge, by examining whether she rejoices equally at the happiness of any one about her; and let her remember she does not rejoice at it in the true sense, if she does not labour to promote it. She who glows with rapture at a virtuous character in history, should ask her own heart, whether she is equally ready to do justice to the frailties of her acquaintance, though she may not particularly love them; and whether she takes unfeigned pleasure in the superior talents, virtues, fame, and fortune of those whom she professes to love, though she is envied by them?

* * * * *

In like manner, in the study of geography and natural history, the attention should be habitually turned to the goodness of Providence, who commonly adapts his various productions of climates to the peculiar wants of the respective inhabitants. To illustrate my meaning by one or two instances out of a thousand.

“that he should do this great thing?”* to the perpetration of that very enormity of which the self-acquitting delinquent could not endure the slightest suggestion.

In this connection may it not be observed, that young persons should be put on their guard against a too implicit belief in the flattering accounts which many voyage-writers are fond of exhibiting of the virtue, amiableness, and benignity of some of the countries newly discovered by our circumnavigators; that they should learn to suspect the superior goodness ascribed to the Hindoos, and particularly the account of the inhabitants of the Pelew Islands? These last indeed have been represented as having almost escaped the universal taint of our common nature, and would seem by their purity to have sprung from another ancestor than Adam.

We cannot forbear suspecting that these pleasing but somewhat overcharged portraits of man, in his natural state, are drawn with the invidious design, by counteracting the doctrine of human corruption, to degrade the value and even destroy the necessity of the Christian sacrifice; by insinuating that uncultivated man is so disposed to rectitude as to supersede the occasion for that redemption which is professedly designed for sinners. That in countries professing Christianity, many are not Christians, will be too readily granted. Yet to say nothing of the vast superiority of goodness in the lives of those who are really governed by Christianity, is there not something even in her reflex light which guides to greater purity many of those who do not profess to walk by it; I doubt much, if numbers of the unbelievers of a Christian country, from the sounder views and better habits derived incidentally and collaterally, as it were, from the influence of a Gospel, the truth of which however they do not acknowledge, would not start at many of the actions which these *heathen perfectionists* daily commit without hesitation.

* 2 Kings, viii, 23.

the religious reader of general history will observe the controlling hand of Providence in the direction of events; in turning the most unworthy actions and intentions to the accomplishment of his own purposes. He will mark infinite wisdom directing what appears casual occurrences, to the completion of his own designs.

She will point out how causes seemingly the most unconnected; events seemingly the most unpromising, instances seemingly the most incongruous, are all brought together for some final good. She will mark how national as well as individual crimes are often directed to some hidden purpose far different from the intention of the actors: how Omnipotence can, often does bring about the best purposes by the worst instruments: how the bloody and unjust conqueror is but "the rod of his wrath," to punish or to chastise his offending children: how "the fury of the oppressor," and the sufferings of the oppressed, will lay, when the whole scheme shall be unfolded, manifest His righteous dealings. She will explain to the enlightened reader, how Infinite Wisdom offsets the insignificance of human greatness, and the hollowness of human ability, by setting aside intentions the most powerful and promising, while He acts by agents comparatively contemptible. But she will carefully guard this doctrine of Divine Providence, working out his own purposes through the sins of his creatures, and by the instrumentality of the wicked by calling to mind, while the offender is but a puppet in the hands of the great Artificer, "the woe denounced against him by whom the offence cometh!" She will explain how those mutations and revolutions of events which appear to us so unaccountable, and those operations of Providence which seem to us so tangled and complicated, all move harmoniously in perfect order: that there is not an event but which has its commission; not a misfortune which breaks its appointed rank; not a trial which moves out of its appointed track. While calamities and crimes seem to be a casual confusion, all is commanded or permitted; all under the control of a wisdom which cannot err, of a goodness which cannot do wrong.

To explain my meaning by a few instances. When the spirit of the youthful reader rises into honest indignation at that hypocritical piety which divorced an unoffending Queen to make way for the lawful crime of our Eighth Henry's marriage with Ann Boleyn; and when that indignation is increased by the more open profligacy which brought about the execution of the latter; the instructor will not lose so fair an occasion for unfolding how in the councils of the Most High the crimes of the King were overruled to the happiness of the country; and how, to this inauspicious marriage, from which the heroic Elizabeth sprang, the Protestant religion owed its firm stability. This view of the subject will lead the reader to justify the Providence of God without diminishing her abhorrence of the vices of the tyrant.

She will explain to her, how even the conquests of ambition, after having deluged a land with blood, involved the perpetrator in guilt, and the innocent victim in the ruin, may yet be made the instrument of opening to future generations the way to commerce, to civilization, to Christianity. She may remind her, as they are following Cæsar in his invasion of Britain, that whereas the conqueror fancied he was only gratifying his own inordinate ambition, extending the flight of the Roman Eagle, immortalizing his own name, and proving that "this world was made for Cæsar;" he was in reality becoming the effectual though unconscious instrument of leading a land of barbarians to civilization and to science: and was in fact preparing an island of Pagans to embrace the religion of Christ. She will inform her, that when afterwards the victorious country of the same Cæsar had made Judea a Roman province, and the Jews had become its tributaries, the Romans did not know, nor did the indignant Jews suspect, that this circumstance was operating to the confirmation of an event the most important the world ever witnessed.

For when, "Augustus sent forth a decree that all the world should be taxed;" he vainly thought he was only enlarging his own imperial power; whereas he was acting in unconscious subservience to the decree

higher Sovereign, and was helping to ascertain public act the exact period of Christ's birth, and thing a record of his extraction from that family which it was predicted by a long line of Prophets he should spring. Herod's atrocious murder of innocents has added an additional circumstance for confirmation of *our* faith ; the incredulity of Thomas strengthened our belief ; nay, the treachery of Judas, and the injustice of Pilate, were the human means employed for the salvation of the world. The youth that is not thoroughly armed with Christian principles, will be tempted to mutiny not only against the justice, but the very existence of a superintending Providence, in contemplating those frequent reverses which occur in history of the ill success of more virtuous cause, and the prosperity of the wicked. He will see with astonishment that it is Rome that triumphs, while Carthage, which had clearly the better cause, falls. Now and then indeed a Cicero prevails, and a Cataline is subdued : but often, it is the wicked that are successful against the somewhat juster pretensions of Pompey, and against the still clearer cause of

It is Octavius who triumphs, and it is over Brutus that he triumphs : It is Tiberius who is dethroned, and Germanicus falls !

Thus his faith in a righteous Providence at first is staggered, and he is ready to say, " Surely it is

God that governs the earth !" But on a fuller consideration, (and here the suggestions of a Christian Pastor are peculiarly wanted,) there will appear wisdom in this very confusion of vice and virtue ; it is calculated to send our thoughts forward to a day of retribution, the principle of retribution being imperfectly established in this. It is indeed so common for virtue to have the advantage here, in the prospect of happiness at least, though not of glory, that the course of Providence is still calculated to prove that God is on the side of virtue ; but still virtue is so unsuccessful, that clearly the God of virtue, in order that his work may be perfect, must have in view a world of retribution. This confused state of things therefore is just that state which is most of all

its severer castigation. And an habit of eloquence should be rejected by polished people as vulgar, if it were not abhorred as profane.

The habit of exaggerating trifles, together with the grand female failing of excessive mutual flattery, elaborate general professions of fondness and attachment, is inconceivably cherished by the voluminous private correspondences in which some girls are engaged. In vindication of this practice it is pleaded a facility of style, and an easy turn of expression, and acquisitions to be derived from an early interest in sentiments by letter-writing; but even if it were, these would be dearly purchased by the loss of that truth, and sobriety of sentiment, that clearness of language, and that ingenuous simplicity of manner and manners so lovely in female youth.

Next to pernicious reading, imprudent attachments and friendships are the most dangerous snares to which female plicity. And boundless correspondences with distant friends, or, as it often happens, in the same street, are the principal cause which principally feeds this dangerous flame of sentiment. In those correspondences friends often encourage each other in the false notions of human life, and the most erroneous view of other's character. Family affairs are divu-

ness in whatever they relate. They should maintain the most critical accuracy in *facts*, in *dates*, in *numbers*, in *describing*, in short, in whatever pertains, either directly or indirectly, closely or remotely, to the most fundamental principle, *Truth*. It is so very difficult for persons of great liveliness to restrain themselves within the sober limits of strict veracity, either in their assertions or narrations, especially when a little undue indulgence of fancy is apt to procure for them the praise of genius and spirit, that this restraint is one of the earliest principles which should be worked into the youthful mind.

The conversation of young females is also in danger of being overloaded with epithets. As in the warm season of youth hardly any thing is seen in the true light of vision, so hardly any thing is named in naked simplicity; and the very sensibility of the feelings is only a cause of the extravagance of the expression. Here, as in other points, the sacred writers, particularly of the New-Testament, present us with the best models; and its natural and unlaboured style of expression is perhaps not the meanest evidence of the truth of the Gospel. There is throughout the whole narratives, no overcharged character, no elaborate description, nothing studiously emphatical, as if truth of itself were weak, and wanted to be helped.

There is little panegyric, and less invective; except on great, and awful, and justifiable occasions. The authors record their own faults with the same honesty as if they were the faults of other men, and faults of other men with as little amplification as they were their own. There is perhaps no book in which adjectives are so sparingly used. A modest statement of the fact, with no colouring and little ornament, with little emphasis and no varnish, is the example held out to us for correcting the exuberances of passion and of language, by that divine volume which furnishes us with the still more important rule of faith and standard of practice. Nor is the truth obscured by any feebleness, nor is the spirit diluted, the impression weakened by this soberness and moderation; for with all this plainness there is so

much force ; with all this simplicity there is energy, that a few slight touches and artless scripture characters convey a stronger outline of a person delineated, than is sometimes given by an elaborate and finished portrait of more artizans.

If it be objected to this remark, that many of the sacred writings abound in a lofty, figurative, even hyperbolical style ; this objection applies to the writings of the Old-Testament, and to the prophetic and poetical parts of that. But the plain and florid style of those writings is different from the inaccurate and over-strained expressions which have been censuring ; for that only is inaccurate which leads to a false and inadequate conception in the reader or hearer. The lofty style of the Eastern heroic poetry, does not so mislead ; for a metaphor is understood to be a metaphor, and a simile is understood to be ornamental. The style of the Scriptures of the Old-Testament is not, it is in opposition to the figurative ; nor simple in opposition to florid ; but it is plain and simple in sense, as opposed to false principles and false facts ; it raises no wrong idea ; it gives an exact impression of the thing it means to convey ; and its very figures, though bold, are never unnatural or extravagant ; when it embellishes it does not mislead ; even when it exaggerates, it does not misrepresent ; if it is hyperbolical, it is so either in compliance with the Oriental language, or in compliance with the Oriental customs, or because the subject is one which can be most forcibly impressed by a strong figurative expression ; the loftiness of the expression deducts nothing

CHAP. XI.

*Religion.—The Necessity and Duty of early Instruction
shown by Analogy with human Learning.*

has been the fashion of our late innovators in philosophy, who have written some of the most brilliant popular treatises on education, to decry the practice of early instilling religious knowledge into the minds of children. In vindication of this opinion it has been alledged, that it is of the utmost importance to the cause of truth, that the mind of man should be left free from prepossessions; and in particular, that every one should be left to form such judgment on religious subjects as may seem best to his own reason in maturer years.

This sentiment has received some countenance from some better characters who have wished, on the fairest principle, to encourage free inquiry into religion; but has been pushed to the blameable excess here censured, chiefly by the new philosophers; who, while they profess only an ingenuous zeal for truth, are industriously endeavouring to destroy Christianity itself, by countenancing, under the plausible pretence of free inquiry, all attention whatever to the religious education of our youth.

It is undoubtedly our duty, while we are instilling principles into the tender mind, to take peculiar care: that those principles be sound and just; that the religion we teach be the religion of the Bible, and not the inventions of human error or superstition: that the principles we infuse into others, be such as we ourselves have well scrutinized, and not the result of our partiality or bigotry; nor the mere hereditary, unexamined prejudices of our own undiscerning childhood. It may also be granted, that it is the duty of every parent to inform the youth, that when his faculties shall be so unfolded themselves, as to enable them to inquire for himself those principles which the parent is now instilling, it will be his duty so to examine them.

poisoned; and may it not be also urged, that to keep the mind void of all prepossession, any subject, appears to be altogether a vain practicable attempt? an attempt, the very of which urges much ignorance of human

Let it be observed here, that we are not the infidel; that we are not producing evil arguments in favour of the truth of Christianity, trying to win over the assent of the reason which he disputes; but that we are tall-granted, not only that Christianity is true, but are addressing those who believe it to be true. A supposition which has been made throughout. Assuming, therefore, that there are religious truths which are true, and which ought to be conveyed in the most effectual manner, the next question arises seems to be, at what age and in what manner ought to be inculcated? That it ought to be in an early period, we have the command of Christ encouragingly said, in answer to those who repelled their approach, "Suffer *little* children unto me."

But here conceding, for the sake of argument, yet cannot be conceded, that some good may be brought in favour of delay; allowing that impressions as are communicated early may be deep; allowing them even to become tottered by the subsequent corruptions of the heart and world; still I would illustrate the importance of infusing religious knowledge, by an allusion from the power of early habit in human nature. Put the case, for instance, of a person who is initiated in the rudiments of classical studies, suppose him after quitting school to have fallen into a course of idleness or of vulgar pursuits, neglect of study. Should this person at a late period happen to be called to some profes-

would oblige him, as we say, to rub up his Greek and Latin; his memory still retaining the unobliterated though faint traces of his early pursuits, he will be able to recover his neglected learning with less difficulty than he could now begin to learn; for he is not again obliged to set out with studying the simple elements; they come back on being pursued; they are found on being searched for; the decayed images assume shape, and strength, and colour; he has in his mind first principles to which to recur; the rules of grammar which he has allowed himself to violate, he does not however forget; he will recall neglected facts, he will resume slighted habits far more easily than he could now begin to acquire new ones. I appeal to clergymen who are called to attend the dying words of such as have been bred in gross and stupid ignorance of religion, for the justness of this comparison. Do they not find that these unhappy people have no language in common with them? That *they* therefore possess no intelligible medium by which to make themselves understood? That the persons to whom they are dressing themselves have no first principles to which they can be referred? That they are ignorant not only of the science, but the language of Christianity?

But at worst, whatever be the event of a pious education to the child, though in general we are encouraged from the tenor of Scripture and the course of experience, to hope that the event will be favourable, and that "when he is old he will not depart from it." Is nothing for the parent to have acquitted himself of his prime duty? Is it nothing to him that he has obeyed the plain command of "training his child in the way he should go?" And will not the parent who so acquits himself, with better reason and more lively hope, supplicate the Father of mercies for the reclaiming of a prodigal, who has wandered out of the right path in which he has set him forward, than for the conversion of a neglected creature, to whose soul the Gospel had never been offered as a light? And how different will be the dying reflections even that parent whose earnest endeavours have been un-

version of his child, from his who will reasonably aggravate his pangs, by transferring the sins of his neglected child to the number of his own transgressions.

And to such well-intentioned but ill-judging parents as really wish their children to be hereafter pious, but erroneously withhold instruction till the more advanced period prescribed by the great master of splendid paradoxes* shall arrive; who can assure them, that while they are withholding the good seed, the great and ever vigilant enemy, who assiduously seizes hold on every opportunity which we slight, and cultivates every advantage which we neglect, may not be stocking the fallow grounds with tares? Nay, who in this fluctuating scene of things can be assured, even if this were not certainly to be the case, that to them the promised period ever shall arrive at all? Who shall ascertain to them that their now neglected child shall certainly live to receive the delayed instruction? Who can assure them that they themselves will live to communicate it?

It is almost needless to observe that parents who are indifferent about religion, much more those who treat it with scorn, are not likely to be anxious on this subject; it is therefore the attention of *religious* parents which is here chiefly called upon; and the more so, as there seems, on this point, an unaccountable negligence in many of these, whether it arise from indolence, false principles, or whatever other motives.

But independent of knowledge, it is something, nay, let philosophers say what they will, it is much, to give youth *prepossessions* in favour of religion, to secure their *prejudices* on its side before you turn them adrift into the world; a world in which, before they can be completely armed with arguments and reasons, they will be assailed by numbers whose prepossessions and prejudices, far more than *their* arguments and reasons, attach them to the other side. Why should not the Christian youth furnish himself in the best cause with the same natural armour which the enemies of religion wear in the worst? It is certain that to set out in life

sentiments in favour of the religion of our country no more an error or a weakness, than to grow up with a fondness for our country itself. If the love of country be judged a fair principle, surely a Christian who is "a citizen of no mean city," may lawfully have *his* attachments too. If patriotism be an evil prejudice, Christianity is not a servile one. Let us teach the youth to hug his prejudices, to yield in his prepossessions, rather than to acquire that flexible and accommodating citizenship of the world, which he may be an Infidel in Paris, a Papist at Rome, and a Mussulman at Cairo.

Let me not be supposed so to elevate politics, or so to depress religion, as to make any comparison of the merits of the one with the other, when I observe, that between the true British patriot and the true Christian, there will be this common resemblance: the more fully each of them inquires, the more will he be convinced in his respective attachment, the one to his country, the other to his religion. I speak with reverence of the immeasurable distance; but the more the pressure on the firm arch of our constitution, and the more on that of Christianity, the stronger he will find it in both. Each challenges scrutiny; each has nothing to dread but from shallow politicians and shallow philosophers; in each intimate knowledge justifies preference; in each investigation confirms attachment. If we divide the human being into three components, the bodily, the intellectual, and the spiritual, is it not reasonable that a portion of care and attention be assigned to each in some degree adequate to its importance? Should I venture to say a *due* portion, a portion adapted to the real comparative value of each, would not that condemn in one word the whole system of modern education? The rational and intellectual part being avowedly more valuable than the bodily, while the spiritual and immortal part exceeds the intellectual still more than that surpasses what is corporeal; is it acting according to the common sense of proportion; is it acting on the principles of distributive justice; is it acting with that good sense and right judgment with which the ordinary business

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th, do you sedulously infuse into his mind the rudiments of syntax? Why in parsing is he led to refer every word to its part of speech, to resolve every sentence into its elements, to reduce every term to its origin, and from the first case of nouns, and the first conjugation of verbs, to explain their formations, changes, dependencies, till the principles of language become rounded, that, by continually recurring to the rules, speaking and writing correctly are fixed into a habit? Is all this, but because you uniformly wish him to be rounded in each of his acquirements? Why, but because you are persuaded that a slight, and slovenly, superficial, and irregular way of instruction will not train him to excellence in any thing?

Do young persons then become musicians, and painters, and linguists, and mathematicians by early study and regular labour; and shall they become Christians by accident? Or rather, is not this acting on that very principle of Dogberry, at which you probably have often laughed? Is it not supposing that religion, like reading and writing, comes by Nature?" Shall all these accomplishments, "which perish in the using," be sedulously, so systematically taught? Shall all those arts, which are limited to the things of this world, be carefully formed, so persisted in, as to be interwoven into our very make, so as to become as it were a part of ourselves; and shall that knowledge which is to save us "wise unto salvation" be picked up at random, fortily, or perhaps not picked up at all? Shall that occult divine science which requires "line upon line, precept upon precept," here a little and there a little; that knowledge which parents, even under a peculiar dispensation, were required "to teach their children *diligently*, and to talk of it when they sat in their house, and when they walked by the way, and when they lay down, and when they rose up;" shall this knowledge be by Christian parents omitted or deferred, or taught slightly; or be superseded by things comparatively little worth?

Shall the lively period of youth, the soft and impressionable season when lasting habits are formed, when the seal cuts deep into the yielding wax, and the im-

that "holiness without which no man can see the Lord;" shall not that knowledge which is the foundation of faith and practice; shall not that character out of which all knowledge is "sounding brass, and tinkling cymbal," be impressed, be inculcated, enforced, as early, as constantly, as fundamentally, with the same earnest pushing on to conquest, with the same constant reference to simple principles, as are used in the case of those arts which adorn human life? Shall we not seize the period when the memory is strong, the mind is vigorous and active, the imagination all alive; the heart flexible, the temper docile, the conscience tender, curiosity awake, fear powerful, love ardent; shall we not seize this period for inculcating that knowledge, and impressing those principles which are to form the character, and determine the destination for eternity?

I would now address myself to another and more dilatory class, who are for procrastinating their concern about religion till they are driven to actual distress, and who do not think of praying till they are perishing, like the sailor who said, "lie thou, I will pray when I begin." "always time enough to begin to pray when I began." Of these I would ask, shall we, with our accountable deliberation, defer our anxiety and

healthy mind, to be put off till the day of excruciating pain, till the period of debility and stupefaction? we wait for that season, as if it were the most favorable for religious acquisitions, when the senses have been palled by excessive gratification, when the eye shall be tired with seeing, and the ear with hearing? Shall we, when the whole man is breaking by disease or decay, expect that the dim apprehension will discern a new science, or the obtuse feelings light themselves with a new pleasure? a pleasure not only incompatible with many of the hitherto indulged pleasures, but one which carries with it a strong intimation that those pleasures terminate in the ruin of the soul.

It is not to lose sight of the important analogy on which we have already dwelt so much; how preposterous would it seem to you to hear any one propose to an illiterate dying man, to set about learning even the plainest and easiest rudiments of any new art; to learn the musical notes; to conjugate a verb; to learn the first problem in Euclid, but even the numeration-table; and yet you do not think it absurd to postpone religious instruction on principles, which, if adopted at all, must terminate either in ignorance or in error, proposing too late to a dying man to begin to learn the totally unknown scheme of Christianity. You do not think it impossible that he should be brought to listen to the "voice of this charmer," when he no longer listens to "the voice of singing men and singing women." You do not think it unreasonable that immortal beings should delay to devote their days to Heaven, till they have "no pleasure in themselves." You will not bring them to offer the first fruits of their lips, and hearts, and lives to their Maker, because you persuade yourselves that he who has called himself a "jealous God," may however be contented hereafter with the wretched sacrifice of decayed appetites, and the worthless leavings of almost extinguished affections.

We can scarcely believe, even with all the melancholy procrastination we see around us, that there is any one, except he be a decided infidel, who does

This awful deception, this defect in the vision, arises, partly from the bulk which things of time and sense acquire in our eyes by the use; while the invisible realities of eternity faintly discerned by a feeble faith, through a distant medium. It arises also partly from false ideas of the nature of Christianity, from false hopes that we can repent at any future period, as amendment is a thing which will always be within our power, it will be time enough to think of laying out here, when we should think only of coming home. But depend upon it, that a heart long hardened does not mean by gross vices merely, but by a long use of the world, by an habitual and excessive indulgence in the pleasures of sense, will by no means be so ready to admit the light of divine truth, nor receive the impressions of divine grace. God sometimes shows us, by an act of his sovereignty, that this wonderful change, the conversion of a heart, may be produced without the intervention of man's means, to show that the work is His. this is not the way in which the Almighty usually deals with his creatures, it would be nearly as proper for men to act on this presumption, and go on in the state of a miraculous conversion, as it would be to

best interests of their children ; those to whom Christianity is indeed an important consideration, but whose habits of life have hitherto hindered them from giving it its due degree in the scale of education.

begin then with considering that religion is a part, the most prominent part, in your system of instruction. Do not communicate its principles in a solemn desultory way ; nor scantily stint this business to only such scraps and remnants of time as may casually be picked up from the gleanings of other accomplishments. " Will you bring to God for a sacrifice that which costs you nothing ? " Let the best part of the day, which with most people is the earliest part, be steadily and invariably dedicated to this work by your children, before they are tired with other studies, while the intellect is clear, the spirits light, and the attention sharp and unfatigued.

Confine not your instructions to mere verbal rituals and dry systems ; but communicate them in a way which shall interest their feelings, by lively images, and by a warm practical application of what they read to their own hearts and circumstances. If you do not reject the great but too much slighted art of fixing, of commanding, of chaining the attention, you may throw away much time and labour, with little other effect than that of disgusting your pupil and wearying yourself.

There seems to be no good reason that while by other things is to be made amusing, religion alone should be dry and uninviting. Do not fancy that a thing is good merely because it is dull. Why should the most entertaining powers of the human mind be supremely consecrated to that subject which is least worthy of their full exercise ? The misfortune is,

religious learning is too often rather considered as an act of the memory than of the heart and affections ; as a dry duty, rather than a lively pleasure.

The manner in which it is taught differs as much from their other learning as punishment from recreation. Children are turned over to the dull work of getting by heart as a task that which they should get from example, from animated conversation, from lively discussion, in which the pupil should learn to bear a part, instead of

audience to

Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

Even when the nature of your subject makes it necessary for you to be more plain and didactic, do frequently to enliven these less engaging parts of discourse with some incidental imagery which captivate the fancy; with some affecting story which it shall be associated in the memory. what would otherwise be too dry and preceptive. Some striking exemplification in point, some testimony to be imitated, some awful warning avoided; something which shall illustrate your position, which shall realize your position; which embody your idea, and give shape and form, and life, to your precept. Endeavour unremittedly to connect the reader with the subject, by making him feel that what you teach is neither an abstract nor a thing of mere general information, but is a business in which *she herself* is individually and immediately concerned; in which not only her salvation but her *present* happiness is involved. According to your measure of ability, what th

ces of Christ and his Apostles were enabled both to comprehend and relish doctrines, which would not readily have made their way to their understandings, had they not first touched their hearts; and which could have found access to neither the one nor the other, had they been delivered in dry scholastic disquisitions. Now, those audiences not being learned, may be supposed to have been nearly in the state of children, as to their receptive faculties, and to have required nearly the same sort of instruction; that is, they were more capable of being moved with what is simple, and touching, and lively, than what was elaborate, abstruse, and unaffecting. Heaven and earth were made to furnish their contributions, when man was to be taught that science which was to make him wise unto salvation. Something which might enforce or illustrate was borrowed from every element. The appearances of the sky, the storms of the ocean, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the fruits of the earth, the seed and the harvest, the labours of the husbandmen, the traffic of the merchant, the seasons of the year! all were laid hold of in turn. And the most important moral instruction, or religious truth, was deduced from some recent occurrence, some natural appearance, some ordinary fact.

If that be the purest eloquence which most persuades, and which comes home to the heart with the clearest evidence and the most irresistible force, then no eloquence is so powerful as that of Scripture: and an intelligent Christian teacher will be admonished by the mode of Scripture itself, how to communicate its truths with life and spirit; "while he is musing, the fire burns:" that fire which will preserve him from an arid and freezing mode of instruction. He will moreover, as was said above, always carefully keep up a quick sense of the personal interest the pupil has in every religious instruction which is impressed upon him. He will teach as Paul prayed, "with the spirit, and with the understanding also;" and in imitating this great model, he will necessarily avoid the opposite faults of two different sorts of instructors; for while none of our divines of the higher class have been so

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qualification for understanding and receiv

words which Christ addressed to Peter, "What I do though knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Histories of the bible, and commentaries on the bible, for the use of children, though valuable in their way, should never be used as substitutes for the bible itself. For historical or geographical information, for calling the attention to events and characters, they are very useful. But scripture truths are best conveyed in its own sublime and simple phraseology; its doctrines are best understood in its own appropriate language; its precepts are best retained in their own simple form. Paraphrase, in professing to explain, often eludes; while the terseness and brevity of scripture composition fills the mind, touches the heart, and fastens on the memory. While I would cause them to "read" the commentary for the improvement of the understanding, they should "mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the bible for the comfort and edification of the heart.

Young people who have been taught religion in a formal and superficial way, who have had all its drudgeries and none of its pleasures, will probably have acquired so little relish for it, as to consider the continued prosecution of their religious studies as a badge of their tutelage, as a mark that they are still under subjection; and will look forward with impatience to the hour of their emancipation from the lectures on Christianity, as the æra of their promised liberty; the epocha of independence. They will long for the period when its lessons shall cease to be delivered; will conclude that, having once attained such an age, and arrived at the required proficiency, the object will be accomplished, and the labour at an end. But let not your children "so learn Christ." Apprise them that no specific day will ever arrive on which they shall say, *I have* attained; but inform them, that every acquisition must be followed up; knowledge must be increased; prejudices subdued; good habits rooted; evil ones eradicated; amiable dispositions strengthened; right principles confirmed; till going on from light to

light, and from strength to strength, they come "to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

But though serious instruction will not only be uninteresting but irksome, if conveyed to youth in a cold didactic way ; yet if their affections be suitably engaged, while their understandings are kept in exercise, their hearts, so far from necessarily revolting, as some insist, will often receive the most solemn truths with alacrity. It is, as we have repeated, the manner which revolts them, and not the thing. Nor will they, as some assert, necessarily dislike the teacher, because the truths taught are of the most awful and solemn kind. It has happened to the writer to be a frequent witness of the gratitude and affection expressed by young persons to those who had sedulously and seriously instructed them in religious knowledge : an affection as lively, a gratitude as warm, as could have been excited by any indulgence to their persons, or any gratification of a worldly nature.

As it is notorious that men of wit and sprightly fancy have been the most formidable enemies to Christianity ; while men, in whom those talents have been consecrated to God, have been some of her most useful champions, take particular care to press that ardent and ever-acting power, the *imagination*, into the service of religion. This bright and busy faculty will be leading its possessor into perpetual peril, and is an enemy of peculiar potency till it come to be employed in the cause of God. It is a lion, which though worldly prudence indeed may *chain* so as to prevent outward mischief, yet the malignity remains within ; but when sanctified by Christianity, the imagination is a lion *tamed* ; you have all the benefit of its strength and its activity, divested of its mischief. God never bestowed that noble but restless faculty, without intending it to be an instrument of his own glory ; though it has been too often set up in rebellion against him ; because, in its youthful stirrings, while all alive and full of action, it has not been seized upon to serve its rightful Sovereign, but was early enlisted with little opposition under the banners of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Religion is the only subject in which, under

guidance of a severe and sober-minded prudence, discursive faculty can safely stretch its powers, expand its energies. But let it be remembered, it must be a sound and genuine Christianity which alone so chastise and regulate the imagination, as to restrain it from those errors and excesses into which life, a mistaken, an irregular religion, has too often its injudicious and ill-instructed professor. Some of the most fatal extremes into which a wild enthusiasm or a frightful superstition has plunged its unhappy victims, have been owing to the want of a due direction, to the want of a strict and holy castigation of the ever-working faculty. To secure imagination, therefore, on the safe side, and, if I may change the metaphor, to put it under the direction of its true pilot in the stormy voyage of life, is like engaging those powerful elements, the wind and tide, in your favour.

In your communications with young people, take care to convince them that as religion is not a business to be laid aside with the lesson, so neither is it a single act of duty; some detached thing, which like the acquisition of an art or a language, is to be practised regularly, and to have its distinct periods and modes of operation. But let them understand, that common to all, by the spirit in which they are to be performed, are to be made acts of religion. Let them perceive that Christianity may be considered as having something of that influence over the conduct which exterior grace has over the manners; for as it is not the performance of some particular act which denominates one to be graceful, grace being a spirit diffused through the whole system, which animates every sentiment, and informs every action; as she who has true personal grace has it uniformly, and is not sometimes awkward and sometimes elegant; does not sometimes cast it down and sometimes take it up; so religion is not an occasional act, but an indwelling principle, an acquired habit, a pervading and informing spirit, in which indeed every act derives all its life, and energy, and beauty.

Give them clear views of the broad discrimination between practical religion and worldly morality; in

that "holiness without which no man can see the Lord;" shall not that knowledge which is the foundation of faith and practice; shall not that charity out of which all knowledge is "sounding brass," "tinkling cymbal," be impressed, be inculcated, enforced, as early, as constantly, as fundamentally with the same earnest pushing on to continuous progress, with the same constant reference to first principles, as are used in the case of those arts which adorn human life? Shall we not seize the happy period when the memory is strong, the mind and powers vigorous and active, the imagination bright and all alive; the heart flexible, the temper ductile, conscience tender, curiosity awake, fear powerful, eager, love ardent; shall we not seize this period for inculcating that knowledge, and impressing those principles which are to form the character, and determine the destination for eternity?

I would now address myself to another and more dilatory class, who are for procrastinating their concern about religion till they are driven to actual distress, and who do not think of praying till they are perishing, like the sailor who said, "he thought always time enough to begin to pray when the storm began." Of these I would ask, shall we, with accountable deliberation, defer our anxiety abo

and healthy mind, to be put off till the day of excruciating pain, till the period of debility and stupefaction? Shall we wait for that season, as if it were the most favourable for religious acquisitions, when the senses shall have been palled by excessive gratification, when the eye shall be tired with seeing, and the ear with hearing? Shall we, when the whole man is breaking up by disease or decay, expect that the dim apprehension will discern a new science, or the obtuse feelings delight themselves with a new pleasure? a pleasure too, not only incompatible with many of the hitherto indulged pleasures, but one which carries with it a strong intimation that those pleasures terminate in the death of the soul.

But, not to lose sight of the important analogy on which we have already dwelt so much; how preposterous would it seem to you to hear any one propose to an illiterate dying man, to set about learning even the plainest and easiest rudiments of any new art; to study the musical notes; to conjugate a verb; to learn, not the first problem in Euclid, but even the numeration table; and yet you do not think it absurd to postpone religious instruction on principles, which, if admitted at all, must terminate either in ignorance or in your proposing too late to a dying man to begin to learn the totally unknown scheme of Christianity. You do not think it impossible that he should be brought to listen to the "voice of this charmer," when he can no longer listen to "the voice of singing men and "singing women." You do not think it unreasonable that immortal beings should delay to devote their days to Heaven, till they have "no pleasure in them" themselves. You will not bring them to offer up the first fruits of their lips, and hearts, and lives to their Maker, because you persuade yourselves that he who has called himself a "jealous God," may however be contented hereafter with the wretched sacrifice of decayed appetites, and the worthless leavings of almost extinguished affections.

We can scarcely believe, even with all the melancholy procrastination we see around us, that there is any one, except he be a decided infidel, who does

antages which will follow a religious course, what notion will they conceive of "the strait gate" and "narrow way?" of the amputation of a "right hand?" of the excision of a "right eye?" of the other strong metaphors by which the Christian warfare is shadowed out? of "crucifying the flesh?" of "mortifying the old man?" of "dying unto sin?" of "overcoming the world?" Do you not think their meek and compassionate Saviour who died for your children loved them as well as you love them? And if this were his language, ought it not to be yours? It is the language of true love; of that love with which a merciful God loved the world, when he spared not his own Son. Do not fear to tell your children what he told his disciples, that "in the world they shall have tribulation;" but teach them to rise superior to it, on *this* principle, by "overcoming the world." Do not then try to conceal from them, that the life of a Christian is necessarily opposite to the life of the world; and do not seek, by a vain attempt at accommodation, to reconcile that difference which Christ himself has pronounced to be irreconcilable.

May it not be partly owing to the want of a due introduction to the knowledge of the real nature and spirit of religion, that so many young Christians, who set out in a fair and flourishing way, decline and wither when they come to perceive the requisitions of experimental Christianity? requisitions which they had not suspected of making any part of the plan; and from which, when they afterwards discover them, they shrink back, as not prepared and hardened for the unexpected contest.

People are no more to be cheated into religion than into learning. The same spirit which influences your oath in a court of justice should influence your discourse in that court of equity—your family. Your children should be told the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is unnecessary to add, that it must be done gradually and discreetly. We know whose example we have for postponing that which the mind is not yet prepared to receive: "I have many things yet to say to you, but ye cannot bear them."

1." Accustom them to reason by analogy. Ex-
 to them that great *worldly* attainments are never
 without great sacrifices ; that the merchant can-
 come rich without industry ; the statesman emi-
 without labour ; the scholar learned without
 ; the hero renowned without danger : would it
 then, on human principles, be unreasonable to
 that the Christian alone should obtain a triumph
 out a warfare ? the highest prize with the lowest
 ions ? an eternal crown without a present cross ?
 hat heaven is the only reward which the idle may
 on upon ? No : though salvation " be the *gift* of
 d," yet it must be "*worked out*." Convince your
 g friends, however, that in this case the difficulty
 e battle bears no proportion to the prize of the
 ry. In one respect, indeed, the point of resem-
 e between worldly and Christian pursuits fails,
 that most advantageously for the Christian ; for
 ; even by the most probable means, which are the
 of talents with diligence, no human prosperity
 e *insured* to the worldly candidate ; while the most
 fsful adventurer may fail by the fault of another ;
 : the best concerted project of the statesman may
 ushed ; the bravest hero lose the battle ; the bright-
 enius fail of getting bread ; and while, moreover,
 leaseure arising even from success in these may be
 oner tasted than it is poisoned by a more prosper-
 ival ; the persevering Christian is safe and certain
 obtaining *his* object ; no misfortunes can defeat *his*
 ; no competition can endanger *his* success ; for
 gh another gain, he will not lose ; nay, the success
 ither, so far from diminishing his gain, is an ad-
 n to it ; the more he diffuses, the richer he grows ;
 lessings are enlarged by communication ; and that
 l hour which cuts off for ever the hopes of
 dly men, crowns and consummates his.
 :ware at the same time of setting up any act of
 lenial or mortification as the *procuring* cause of
 tion. This would be a presumptuous project to
 ise that eternal life which is declared to be the
 e *gift* of God." This would be to send your chil-
 , not to the Gospel to learn their Christianity, but

great physician. Without this guard the y
vout Christian would be led to fancy that a
pilgrimage, and penance might be adopted as
substitute for the subdued desire, the resiste
tion, the conquered corruption, and the obed
and would be almost in as much danger o
hand, of self-righteousness arising from auste
mortification, as she would be, on the other,
gratification in the indulgences of the wor
while you carefully impress on her the ne
living a life of strict obedience if she would pl
do not neglect to remind her also that a cor
nunciation of her own performances as a
merit, *purchasing* the favour of God by their
trinsic worth is included in that obedience.

It is of the first importance, in stamping
minds a true impression of the genius of Chi
to possess them with a conviction that it is t
of the motive which not only gives worth an
but which, in a Christian sense, gives life and
the best actions : nay that while a right inter
be acknowledged and accepted as the final j
even without the act, the act itself will be
which wanted the basis of a pure design.
“didst well that it was in thy *heart* to build n
“ple.” said the Almighty to that Monarch u

professor, on the unfruitful worker of "miracles," on the unsanctified utterer of "prophecies;" for even acts of piety wanting the purifying principle, however they may dazzle men, offend God. Cain sacrificed; Balaam prophesied; Rousseau wrote the most sublime panegyric on the *Son of Mary*; VOLTAIRE BUILT A CHURCH! nay, so superior was *his* affectation of sanctity, that he ostentatiously declared, that while others were raising churches to *Saints*, there was one man at least who would erect *his* church to *God*: * that God whose altars he was overthrowing, whose name he was villifying, whose Gospel he was exterminating, and the very name of whose Son he had solemnly pledged himself to blot from the face of the earth!

Though it be impossible here to enumerate all those Christian virtues which should be impressed in the progress of a Christian education, yet in this connection I cannot forbear mentioning one which more immediately grows out of the subject; and to remark that the principle which should be the invariable concomitant of all instruction, and especially of religious instruction, is *humility*. As this temper is inculcated in every page of the Gospel; as it is deducible from every precept and every action of Christ; that is a sufficient intimation that it should be made to grow out of every study, that it should be grafted on every acquisition. It is the turning point, the leading principle indicative of the very genius, of the very being of Christianity. This chastising quality should therefore be constantly made in education to operate as the only counteraction of that "knowledge which puffeth up." Youth should be taught that as humility is the discriminating characteristic of our religion, therefore a proud Christian, an haughty disciple of a crucified Master, furnishes perhaps a stronger opposition in terms than the whole compass of language can exhibit. They should be taught that humility being the appropriate grace of Christianity, is precisely the thing which makes Christian and Pagan virtues *essentially* different. The virtues

* "*Deo crexit Voltaire*" is the inscription affixed by himself on his church at Ferney.

he would not become a Christian, yet order
image of Christ should be set up in the Pan-
theon of the heathen gods, and be worshipped
mon with them ; Christianity not only rejects
partnerships with other religions, but it
their images, defaces their temples, tramples
honours, founds its own existence on the r-
rious religions and spurious virtues, and w-
thing when it is admitted to be any thing.

Will it be going too much out of the way
that Christian Britain retaliates upon Pag-
For if the former used humility in a bad
not the latter learnt to use pride in a good
we without impertinence venture to remark
deliberations of as honourable and upright
semblies as ever adorned, or, under Prov-
held a country ; in orations which leave u-
envy in Attic or Roman eloquence in their
It were to be wished that we did not be-
Rome an epithet which suited the genius
gion, as much as it militates against that of
panegyrist of the battle of Marathon, of P-
Zama, might with propriety speak of a "a-

iority. As we must despair of the victory, let us in the contest.

Love all things then you should beware that yours do not take up with a vague, general, and uned religion ; but look to it that their Christianity really the religion of Christ. Instead of flurring the doctrines of the Cross, as disreputable appendages to our religion, which are to be disguised or got as well as we can, but which are never to be dwelt on, take care to make these your grand fundamental ones. Do not dilute or explain away these doctrines, by some elegant periphrasis *hint* at a Saviour, instead of making him the foundation stone of your system. Do not convey primary, and plain, and awful, and indubitable truths elliptically, I mean as something that be understood without being expressed ; nor study innumerable circumlocutions to avoid names and things which our salvation hangs, in order to prevent your discourse from being offensive. Persons who are thus affected in religion with more good-breeding than plainness and simplicity, imbibe a distaste for plain natural language ; and the scriptures themselves are little in use with a certain fashionable class of readers, that when the doctrines and language of the scriptures occasionally occur in other authors, or in connection, they present a sort of novelty and peculiarity which offend ; and such readers as disuse the Bible are led from a supposed delicacy of taste, to call that preposterous and puritannical which is in fact sound and scriptural.

Nay, it has several times happened to the author to hear persons of sense and learning ridicule insensate sentiments and expressions that have fallen in their ears, which they would have treated with decent regard had they known them to be, as they really were, of scripture. This observation is hazarded with a view to enforce the importance of early communicating religious knowledge, and of infusing an early reverence for the venerable phraseology of scripture.

Persons in question thus possessing a kind of nominal Christianity, are apt to acquire a sort of Paganism also, which just enables them to speak with a fluency of the " Deity," of a " First Cause," and

of "conscience." Nay, some may even go so far as to talk of "the Founder of our religion," of the "Author of Christianity," in the same general terms they would talk of the prophet of Arabia, or the giver of China, of Athens, or of the Jews. But the refined ears revolt not a little at the unadorned name of Christ; and especially the naked and unequal term of our Saviour, or Redeemer, carries with it something queerish, inelegant, not to say a suspicious sound. They will express a serious disapprobation of what is wrong, under the moral term of *vices*, or the forensic term of *crime*; but they are apt to think that the scriptural term of *sin* has something fanatical in it; and while they discover a great respect for morality, they do not much relish holiness, which is indeed the specific and only morality of a Christian. They speak readily of a man's reforming, or leaving off a vicious habit, or growing more correct in some individual practice; but the idea conveyed under any of the scripture phrases signifying a total change of heart they would stigmatize as the very shibboleth of a fanatic, though it is the language of a Liturgy they affect to admire, and of a Gospel which they profess to receive.

CHAP. XIII.

Hints suggested for furnishing Young Persons with a School of Prayer.

THOSE who are aware of the inestimable value of prayer themselves, will naturally be anxious not only that this duty should be earnestly inculcated on their children, but that they should be taught it in the proper manner; and such parents need little persuasion or counsel on the subject. Yet children of decent and orderly (I will not say of strictly religious) families are often so superficially instructed in this important business, that when they are asked what prayer is, they it is not unusual for them to answer, "the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed." And even some who are better taught, are not always made to understand with sufficient clearness the specific distinction between

two ; that the one is the confession of their *faith*, and the other the model for their *supplications*. By this confused and indistinct beginning they set out with a perplexity in their ideas, which is not always completely disentangled in more advanced life.

An intelligent mother will seize the first occasion which the child's opening understanding shall allow, for making a little course of lectures on the Lord's Prayer, taking every division or short sentence separately ; for each furnishes valuable materials for a distinct lecture. The child should be led gradually through every part of this divine composition ; she should be taught to break it into all the regular divisions, into which indeed it so naturally resolves itself. She should be made to comprehend one by one, each of its short but weighty sentences ; to amplify and spread them out for the purpose of better understanding them, not in their most extensive and critical sense, but in their most simple and obvious meaning. For in those condensed and substantial expressions every word is an *oracle*, and will bear beating out ; so that the teacher's difficulty will not so much be what she shall say, as what she shall suppress, so abundant is the expository matter which this succinct pattern suggests.

When the child has a pretty good conception of the meaning of each division, she should then be made to observe the connection, relation, and dependance of the several parts of this prayer one upon another ; for there is great method and connection in it. We pray that the "kingdom of God may come," as the best means to "hallow his name ;" and that by us, the obedient subjects of his kingdom, "his will may be done." A judicious interpreter will observe how logically and consequently one clause grows out of another, though she will use neither the word logical nor consequence ; for all explanations should be made in the most plain and familiar terms, it being words, and not things, which commonly perplex children, if, as it sometimes happens, the teacher, though not wanting sense, want perspicuity and simplicity.*

* It might perhaps be a safe rule to establish for prayer in general, to

has been perhaps loaded with long and unedifying forms, which they have been accustomed to swallow in the lump without scrutiny and without discrimination. Prayer should not be so swallowed. It is a regular prescription which should stand analysis and examination: it is not a charm, the successful use of which depends on your blindly taking it, without knowing what is in it, and in which the good you receive is promoted by your ignorance of its cause.

I would have it understood that by these limitations, I do not mean that the child should be taught to learn dry, and to her, unintelligible exposition, that the exposition is to be colloquial. And I must remark in general, that the teacher is sometimes unreasonably apt to relieve herself at the cheap expence, by loading the *memory* of a little creature with notions in which far other faculties should be put to exercise. The child herself should be made to furnish a good part of this extemporaneous commentary on the answers; in which answers she will be much assisted by the judgment the teacher uses in her method of questioning. And the youthful understanding, if its powers are properly set at work, will soon furnish answers by exercise, so as to furnish reasonable, if not correct answers.

Written forms of prayer are not only of

a little effect on their minds. They will not understand what they repeat, if we do not early open to them the important *scheme* of prayer. Without such elementary introduction to this duty, they will afterwards be either ignorant, or enthusiasts, or both. We should give them *knowledge* before we can expect them to make much progress in *piety*, and as a due preparative to it: Christian instruction in this resembling a sun, who, in the course of his communications, gives light before he gives heat. And to labour to excite a spirit of devotion without first infusing that knowledge out of which it is to grow, is practically reviving the Popish maxim, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," and virtually adopting the Popish rule of praying in an unknown tongue.

Children, let me again observe, will not attend to their prayers if they do not understand them; and they will not understand them, if they are not taught to analyse, to dissect them, to know their component parts, and to methodise them.

It is not enough to teach them to consider prayer under the general idea that it is an application to God for what they want, and an acknowledgment to Him of what they have. This, though true in the gross, is not sufficiently precise and correct. They should learn to define and arrange all the different parts of prayer. And as a preparative to prayer itself, they should be impressed with as clear an idea as their capacity and the nature of the subject will admit, of HIM with whom they have to do." His omnipresence is perhaps, of all his attributes, that of which we may make the first practical use. Every head of prayer is founded on some great scriptural truths, which this little analysis here suggested will materially assist to fix in their minds.

On the knowledge that "God is," that he is an infinitely Holy Being, and that "he is the Rewarder of all them that diligently seek him," will be grounded the first part of prayer, which is *adoration*. The creature devoting itself to the Creator, or *self-dedication*, next presents itself. And if they are first taught that important truth, that as needy creatures they want

help, which may be done by some easy analogy, they will easily be led to understand how naturally *petition* forms a most considerable branch of prayer : and divine grace being among the things for which they are to petition, this naturally suggests to the mind the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit. And when to this is added the conviction which will be readily worked into an ingenuous mind, that as offending creatures they want pardon, the necessity of *confession* will easily be made intelligible to them. But they should be brought to understand that it must not be such a general and vague confession as awakens no sense of personal humiliation, as excites no recollection of their own more peculiar and individual faults. But it must be a confession founded on self-knowledge, which is itself to arise out of the practice of self-examination : for want of this sort of discriminating habit, a well-meaning but ill-instructed girl may be caught confessing the sins of some other person, and omitting those which are more especially her own. On the gladness of heart natural to youth, it will be less difficult to impress the delightful duty of *thanksgiving*, which forms so considerable a branch of prayer. In this they should be habituated to recapitulate not only their general, but to enumerate their particular, daily, and incidental mercies, in the same specific manner as they should have been taught to detail their individual and personal *wants* in the petitionary, and their *faults* in the confessional part. The same warmth of feeling which will more readily dispose them to express their gratitude to God in thanksgiving, will also lead them more gladly to express their love to their parents and friends, by adopting another indispensable, and, (to an affectionate heart,) pleasing part of prayer, which is *intercession*.

When they have been made, by a plain and perspicuous mode of instruction, fully to understand the different nature of all these ; and when they clearly comprehend that *adoration*, *self-dedication*, *confession*, *petition*, *thanksgiving*, and *intercession*, are distinct heads, which must not be involved in each other, you may exemplify the rules by pointing out to them these successive branches in any well written form. And they will

y discern, that ascription of glory to that God to whom we owe so much, and on whom we so entirely depend, is the conclusion into which a Christian's heart will naturally resolve itself. It is hardly needful to remind the teacher that our truly Scriptural Liturgy invariably furnishes the example of presenting all requests in the name of the great Mediator. For there is no access to the Throne of Grace but by *that and living way*. In the Liturgy too they will meet with the best exemplifications of prayers, exhibiting rare specimens of each of the distinct heads we have been suggesting.

But in order that the minds of young persons may, without labour or difficulty, be gradually brought into a state of preparation as to be benefited by such a course of lectures as we have recommended; they should, from the time when they were first able to read, have been employing themselves at their leisure hours, in laying in a store of provision for their present demands. And here the memory may be employed to good purpose; for being the first faculty which is ripened, and which is indeed perfected when the others are only beginning to unfold themselves, it is an intimation of Providence that it should be first seized on for the best uses. It should therefore be devoted to lay in a stock of the more easy and rational parts of Scripture. The Psalms alone are an inexhaustible store-house of rich materials.* Children, whose minds have been early well furnished with these, will be competent at nine or ten years old to produce from them, and to select with no contemptible judgment, suitable examples of all the parts of prayer; and will be able to extract and appropriate passages under each respective head, so as to exhibit, with help, complete specimens of every part of prayer. Confining them entirely to the sense, and nearly to the words of Scripture, they will be preserved

This will be so far from spoiling the cheerfulness, or impeding the pleasures of childhood, that the Author knows a little girl who, before she was seven years old, had learnt the whole Psalter through a good time: and that without any diminution of uncommon gaiety of spirits, or any interference with the elegant acquirements suited to her age.

from enthusiasm, from irregularity, and conceit. By being obliged continually to apply for themselves, they will get a habit in all their difficulties of "searching the Scriptures," which may be hereafter useful to them on other and more trying occasions. But I would at first *confine* them to the Bible; for were they allowed with equal freedom to ransack other books with a view to get helps to embellish their little compositions, or rather compilations, they might be tempted to pass off for their own, what they pick up from others, which might tend at once to make them both vain and deceitful. This is a temptation to which they are too much laid open when they find themselves extravagantly commended for any pilfered passage with which they decorate their little themes and letters. But in the present instance there is no danger of any similar deception, for there is such a sacred signature stamped on every Scripture phrase, that the owner's name can never be defaced or torn off from the goods, either by fraud or violence.

It would be well, if in those Psalms which children were first directed to get by heart, an eye were had to this their future application; and that they were employed, but without any intimation of your subsequent design, in learning such as may be best turned to this account. In the hundred and thirty-ninth, the first great truth to be imprinted on the young heart, the divine omnipresence, as was before observed, is unfolded with such a mixture of majestic grandeur, and such an interesting variety of intimate and local circumstances, as is likely to seize on the quick and lively feelings of youth. The awful idea that that Being whom she is taught to reverence, is not only *in general* "acquainted with all her ways," but that "he is about her path," "and about her bed," bestows such a sense of real and present existence on *him* of whom she is apt to conceive as having his distant habitation only in Heaven, as will greatly help her to realize the sense of his actual presence.

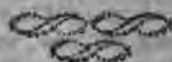
The hundred and third Psalm will open to the mind rich and abundant sources of expression for gratitude and thanksgiving, and it includes the acknowledgment

piritual as well as temporal favours. It illustrates compassionate mercies of God by familiar and domestic images, of such peculiar tenderness and exquisiteness, as are calculated to strike upon every cord of filial fondness in the heart of an affectionate child. The fifty-first supplies an infinite variety of matter in whatever relates to confession of sin, or to supplication for the aids of the Spirit. The twenty-third abounds with captivating expressions of the promising goodness and tender love of their heavenly Father, conveyed by pastoral imagery of uncommon purity and sweetness : in short, the greater part of these charming compositions overflows with materials for every head of prayer.

The child who, while she was engaged in learning these Scriptures, was not aware that there was any specific object in view, or any farther end to be answered by it, will afterwards feel an unexpected pleasure arising from the application of her petty labours, when she is called to draw out from her little treasury of knowledge the stores she has been insensibly collecting ; and will be pleased to find that without any fresh application to study, for she is now obliged to exercise a higher faculty than memory, she has lying ready in her mind the materials with which she is at length enabled upon to work. Her judgment must be set about choosing one, or more texts which shall contain the substance of every specific head of prayer before noted ; and it will be a farther exercise to her understanding to concatenate the detached parts into one regular whole, occasionally varying the arrangement she likes ; that is, changing the order, sometimes beginning with invocation, sometimes with confession ; sometimes dwelling longer on one part, sometimes on another. As the hardships of a religious Sunday are so pathetically pleaded, as making one of the heaviest burdens of religion ; and as the friends of religion are so often called upon to mitigate its insupportable rigours, by recommending pleasant employment, might not such an exercise as has been here suggested help, by varying its occupations, to lighten its load ?

qualified to use a well-composed form, if not
with seriousness and advantage ; for she will not
it not mechanically, but rationally. That which
fore appeared to her a mere mass of good words
now appear a significant composition, exhibiting
ety, and regularity, and beauty ; and while she
have the farther advantage of being enabled by im-
proved judgment to distinguish and select for her
purpose such prayers as are more judicious and
scriptural, it will also habituate her to look for
and design, and lucid order, in other works.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.





STRICTURES
ON THE
MODERN SYSTEM
OF
FEMALE EDUCATION.

VOL. II.

CHAP. XIV.

*practical Use of Female Knowledge, with a Sketch of the
Female Character, and a comparative View of the Sexes.*

THE chief end to be proposed in cultivating the understandings of women, is to qualify them for the ethical purposes of life. Their knowledge is not, as in men, to be reproduced in literary composition, nor ever in any learned profession; but it is to come out in conduct.—It is to be exhibited in life and manners. A lady studies, not that she may qualify herself to become an orator or a reader; not that she may learn to debate, but to act. It is to read the best books, not so much to enable her to talk of them, as to bring the improvement which they furnish, to the rectification of her principles and the formation of her habits. The great uses of study to a woman are to enable her to regulate her own mind, and to be instrumental to the good of others.

arguments. She mould pursue every science which will teach her to elicit truth ; which will lead her to be intent upon realities ; will give her clear and distinct ideas ; will make an exact mind. She will cultivate every study which, instead of stimulating sensibility, will chastise it ; which will not lead to an excessive or a false refinement ; which will give definite notions ; will bring the imagination under dominion ; will lead her to think, to compare, to methodise ; which will confer such a power of discrimination, that her judgment shall learn to distinguish what is dazzling, if it be not solid ; and to prize what is striking, or bright, or new, but which is not solid. That kind of knowledge which is rather fitted for domestic consumption than foreign exportation, is best adapted to women.*

It is because the superficial nature of their education furnishes them with a false and low standard of intellectual excellence, that women have too often become ridiculous by the unfounded pretensions of literary vanity : for it is not the really learned and sober-minded, who have generally brought themselves into discredit, by an absurd affectation, which has its origin in despising the duties of ordinary life. There has not indeed been wanting (but the character is now common) *precieuses ridicules*, who, assuming

n talents and usefulness, instead of bearing in mind talents are the great appointed instruments of usefulness; who have acted as if knowledge were to confer on woman a kind of fantastic sovereignty, which should exonerate her from the discharge of female duties; whereas it is only meant the more eminently to qualify her for the performance of them. A woman of real sense will never forget, that while the greater part of her proper duties are such as the most moderately gifted may fulfil with credit, (since Providence never makes that to be very difficult, which is generally necessary,) yet that the most highly endowed are equally bound to fulfil them; and let her remember that the noblest of these offices, performed on Christian principles, are wholesome for the minds even of the most enlightened, as they tend to the casting down of those "high imaginations" which women of genius are too often tempted to indulge.

For instance; ladies whose natural vanity has been exalted by a false education, may look down on *economy* as a vulgar attainment, unworthy of the attention of an highly cultivated intellect; but this is a false estimate of a shallow mind. *Æconomy*, such a woman of fortune is called on to practise, is not only the petty detail of small daily expences, the frugality by curtailments and stinted parsimony of a little money, operating on little concerns; but it is the exercise of a sound judgment exerted in the comprehensive plan of order, of arrangement, of distribution; of regulations by which alone well-governed societies, great and small, subsist. She who has the best regulated mind will, other things being equal, have the best regulated family. As in the superintendence of the universe, wisdom is seen in its *effects*; and as in the works of Providence that which goes on with beautiful regularity is the result not of chance but of design; so that management which seems the most haphazard, is commonly the consequence of the best concert-plan: and a well-concerted plan is seldom the offspring of an ordinary mind. A sound *æconomy* is a sound understanding brought into action; it is calculation realized; it is the doctrine of proportion.

has been perhaps loaded with long and un-
forms, which they have been accustomed to
in the lump without scrutiny and without dis-
tinction. Prayer should not be so swallowed. It
is a particular prescription which should stand analysis
and examination: it is not a charm, the successful
of which depends on your blindly taking it,
knowing what is in it, and in which the ge-
neral receive is promoted by your ignorance of its e-

I would have it understood that by these li-
cences, I do not mean that the child should be
taught dry, and to her, unintelligible exposition
that the exposition is to be colloquial. And
must remark in general, that the teacher is too
unreasonably apt to relieve herself at the ch-
pence, by loading the *memory* of a little creature
with notions in which far other faculties should be pu-
ercise. The child herself should be made to furnish
a good part of this extemporaneous commentary
in answers; in which answers she will be much
aided by the judgment the teacher uses in her in-
questioning. And the youthful understanding
its powers are properly set at work, will soon be
enabled by exercise, so as to furnish reasonable, if
correct answers.

little effect on their minds. They will not understand what they repeat, if we do not early open to them the important *scheme* of prayer. Without such elementary introduction to this duty, they will afterwards be either ignorant, or enthusiasts, or both.

Should give them *knowledge* before we can expect them to make much progress in *piety*, and as a due prelude to it: Christian instruction in this resembling *sun*, who, in the course of his communications, gives light before he gives heat. And to labour to excite a spirit of devotion without first infusing that knowledge out of which it is to grow, is practically reviving the Popish maxim, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," and virtually adopting the Popish rule of praying in an unknown tongue.

Children, let me again observe, will not attend to their prayers if they do not understand them; and they will not understand them, if they are not taught to analyse, to dissect them, to know their component parts, and to methodise them.

It is not enough to teach them to consider prayer under the general idea that it is an application to God for what they want, and an acknowledgment to Him for what they have. This, though true in the gross, is not sufficiently precise and correct. They should learn to define and arrange all the different parts of prayer. And as a preparative to prayer itself, they should be impressed with as clear an idea as their capacity and the nature of the subject will admit, of HIM with whom they have to do." His omnipresence is perhaps, of all his attributes, that of which we first make the first practical use. Every head of prayers founded on some great scriptural truths, which this little analysis here suggested will materially assist to fix in their minds.

On the knowledge that "God is," that he is an infinitely Holy Being, and that "he is the Rewarder of all them that diligently seek him," will be grounded the first part of prayer, which is *adoration*. The creature devoting itself to the Creator, or *self-dedication*, next presents itself. And if they are first taught that important truth, that as needy creatures they want

invention, prove only, that she wants taste and edge. That while conversation must polish reflection invigorate her ideas, she must improve large them by the accession of various kinds of elegant literature; and that the mind will repay with large interest the seed it by judicious study. Let it be observed, I mean *encouraging* young ladies to turn authors only reminding them, that

Authors before they write should read;

I am only putting them in mind that to be ignorant is not to be original.

These self-taught, and self-dependent scribblers for the unmerited and unattainable praise of genius, while they disdain the common judgment, knowledge, and perseverance which probably be within their reach. To extor- tion they are accustomed to boast of an impetuosity in composing; and while they in a little time their performances cost them, they you should infer how perfect they might have been had they condescended to the drudgery of application: but application with them implies genius. They take superfluous pains to convince that there was neither learning nor labour en-

ing at all ; as in the former case the work would be less defective, and in the latter the writer I have discovered more humility and self-distrust. general capacity for knowledge, and the cultivation of the understanding at large, will always put a woman into the best state for directing her pursuits through those particular channels which her destination may afterwards require. But she should be carefully instructed that her talents are only a means to a higher attainment, and that she is not to rest in them as an end ; that merely to exercise them as instruments for the acquisition of fame and the promotion of pleasure, is subversive of her delicacy as a woman, and contrary to the spirit of a Christian. Industry, therefore, is to be considered as the means of strengthening the mind, and of fitting it for higher attainments, just as exercise is to be considered as an instrument for strengthening the body for the same purpose. the valetudinarian who is religiously punctual in observance of his daily rides to promote his health, esteems in that as an end, without so much as intending to make his improved health an instrument of increased usefulness, acts on the same low and selfish principle with her who reads merely for pleasure and amusement, without any design of devoting the more enlivened and invigorated mind to the glory of the Giver. But there is one *human* consideration which would perhaps more effectually tend to damp in an aspiring woman the ardours of literary vanity (I speak not of genius, though there the remark often applies) than any which she will derive from motives of honour, or propriety, or religion ; which is, that in the present passed on her performances, she will have to enter the mortifying circumstance of having her talents always taken into account ; and her highest exertions will probably be received with the qualified approbation, *that it is really extraordinary for a woman*. Those works of learning, who are naturally inclined to estimate works in proportion as they appear to be the result of art, study, and institution, are inclined to consider even the happier performances of the other sex as spontaneous productions of a fruitful but still

low foil; and to give them the same kind of praise which we bestow on certain fallads, which often draw from us a sort of wondering commendation; not indeed as being worth much in themselves, but because by the lightness of the earth, and a happy knack of the gardener, these indifferent cresses spring up in a night, and therefore we are ready to wonder they are no worse.

As to men of sense, however, they need be the less hostile to the improvement of the other sex, as they themselves will be sure to be gainers by it; the enlargement of the female understanding being the most likely means to put an end to those petty and absurd contentions for equality which female smatterers so anxiously maintain. I say smatterers, for between the first class of both sexes the question is much more rarely and always more temperately agitated. Co-operation and not competition is indeed the clear principle we wish to see reciprocally adopted by those higher minds in each sex which really approximate the nearest to each other. The more a woman's understanding is improved, the more obviously she will discern that there can be no happiness in any society where there is a perpetual struggle for power; and the more her judgment is rectified, the more accurate views will she take of the station she was born to fill, and the more readily will she accommodate herself to it; while the most vulgar and ill-informed women are ever most inclined to be tyrants, and those always struggle most vehemently for power, who feel themselves at the greatest distance from deserving it, and who would not fail to make the worst use of it when attained. Thus the weakest reasoners are always the most positive in debate; and the cause is obvious, for *they* are unavoidably driven to maintain their pretensions by violence, who want arguments and reasons to prove that they are in the right.

There is this singular difference between a woman vain of her wit, and a woman vain of her beauty; that the beauty, while she is anxiously alive to her own fame, is often indifferent enough about the beauty of other women; and provided she herself is sure of your admiration, she does not insist on your think-

ing that there is no other handsome woman in the world : while she who is vain of her genius, more liberal at least in her vanity, is jealous for the honour of her whole sex, and contends for the equality of their pretensions as a body, in which she feels that her own are involved as an individual. The beauty vindicates her own rights, the wit, the rights of women ; the beauty fights for herself, the wit for a party ; and while the more selfish though more moderate beauty

Would but be Queen for life,

the public spirited wit struggles to abrogate the Salique law of intellect, and to enthrone

An whole sex of Queens.

At the revival of letters in the sixteenth and the following century, the controversy about this equality was agitated with more warmth than wisdom ; and the process was instituted and carried on, on the part of the female complainant, with that sort of acrimony which always raises a suspicion of the justice of any cause ; for violence commonly implies doubt, and inrective indicates weakness rather than strength. The novelty of that knowledge which was then bursting out from the dawn of a long dark night, kindled all the ardours of the female mind, and the ladies fought zealously for a portion of that renown which the reputation of learning was beginning to bestow. Besides their own pens, they had for their advocates all those needy authors who had any thing to hope from their power, their riches, or their influence ; and so giddy did some of these literary ladies become by the adulation of their numerous panegyrists, that through these repeated draughts of inebriating praise, they even lost their former moderate measure of sobermindedness, and grew to despise the equality for which they had before contended, as a state below their merit, and unworthy their acceptance. They now scorned to litigate for what they already thought they so obviously possessed, and nothing short of the palm of superiority was at length considered as adequate to their growing claims. When court-ladies and princesses were the candidates, they could not long want champions to

support their cause; by these champions female authorities were produced as if paramount to facts; quotations from these female authors were considered as proofs, and their point-blank assertions stood for solid and irrefragable arguments. In those parasites who offered this homage to female genius, the homage was the effect neither of truth, nor of justice, nor of conviction. It arose rather out of gratitude, or it was a reciprocation of flattery; it was sometimes vanity, it was often distress, which prompted the adulation; it was the want of a patroness; it was the want of a dinner. When a lady, and especially as it then often happened, when a lady who was noble or royal, sat with gratifying docility at the foot of a professor's chair; when she admired the philosopher, or took upon her to protect the theologian, whom his rivals among his own sex were tearing to pieces, what could the grateful professor or delighted theologian do less in return than make the apotheosis of her who had had the penetration to discern his merit, and the spirit to reward it? Thus in fact it was not so much *her* vanity as his own that he was often flattering, though she was the dupe of her more deep and designing panegyrist.

But it is a little unfortunate for the perpetuity of that fame which the encomiast had made over to his patroness, in the never-dying records of his verses and orations, that in the revolution of a century or two the very names of the flattered are now almost as little known as the works of the flatterers. *Their memorial is perished with them.** An instructive lesson, reminding us, that whoever bestows, or assumes a reputation disproportioned to the merit of the claimant, will find that reputation as little durable as it is solid. For this literary warfare which engaged such troops of the second-hand authors of the age in question, in such continual skirmishes, and not a few pitched battles; which provoked so much rancour, so many volumes, and so little wit; so much vanity, so much flattery, and so much invective, produced no useful or lasting effect. Those who promised themselves that their names would

* See Brantome, Pere le Moine, Mont. Thomas, &c.

: "one half of round eternity," did not reach d of the century in which the boast was made ; ose who prodigally offered the incense, and those reedily snuffed up its fumes, are buried in the lank oblivion !

when the temple of Janus seemed to have been , or when at worst the peace was only occasion-oken by a slight and random shot from the hand e single straggler ; it appears that though open on had ceased, yet the female claim had not been iced ; it had only (if we may change the meta-ain in abeyance. The contest has recently been l with added fury, and with multiplied exactions ; ereas the ancient demand was merely a kind of ary prerogative, a speculative importance, a mere right, a shadowy claim to a few unreal acres of lian territory ; the revived contention has taken e serious turn, and brings forward political as ; intellectual pretensions ; and among the inno- ; of this innovating period, the imposing term *its* has been produced to sanctify the claim of male pretenders, with a view not only to rekin- the minds of women a presumptuous vanity dis- rable to their sex, but produced with a view to in their hearts an impious discontent with the hich God has assigned them in this world.

they little understand the true interests of wo- ho would lift her from the important duties of otted station, to fill with fantastic dignity a los- at less appropriate niche. Nor do they under- her true happiness, who seek to annihilate dis- ns from which she derives advantages, and to t innovations which would depreciate her real

Each sex has its proper excellencies, which be lost were they melted down into the com- character by the fusion of the new philosophy. Should we do away distinctions which increase utual benefits, and enhance the satisfactions of Whence, but by carefully preserving the origi- arks of difference stamped by the hand of the or, would be derived the superior advantages of society ? Is either sex so abounding in perfec-

tion as to be independent on the other for improvement? Have men no need to have their rough and filed off, and their harshnesses and asperities smoothed and polished by assimilating with beings of more softness and refinement? Are the ideas of women naturally so *very* judicious, are their principles so *irrevocably* firm, are their views so *perfectly* correct, are their judgments so *completely* exact, that there is occasion for additional weight, no superadded strength, no increased clearness, none of that enlargement of mind, nor of that additional invigoration which may be derived from the aids of the stronger sex? What ideas could advantageously supersede such an enlivening opposition, such an interesting variety of character? Is not then more wise as well as more honourable to be contentedly in the plain path which Providence has obviously marked out to the sex, and in which custom has for the most part rationally confirmed them, rather than to stray awkwardly, unbecomingly, and unsuccessfully, in a forbidden road? Is it not desirable to be the lawful possessors of a lesser domestic territory, rather than the turbulent usurpers of a wider foreign empire? To be good originals, than bad imitators? to be the best thing of one's own kind, rather than an inferior thing even if it were of an higher kind? to be excellent women rather than indifferent men?

Is the author then undervaluing her own sex?—No. It is her zeal for their true *interests* which leads her to oppose their imaginary *rights*. It is her regard to their happiness which makes her endeavour to cure them of a feverish thirst for a fame as unattainable as inappropriate; to guard them against an ambition as little becoming the delicacy of their female character as the meekness of their religious profession. A little Christian humility and sober-mindedness are worth all the empty renown which was ever obtained by the misapplied energies of the sex; it is worth all the wild metaphysical discussion which has ever been obtruded under the name of reason and philosophy; which has unsettled the peace of vain women, and forfeited the respect of reasonable men. And the most elaborate definition of ideal rights, and the most hardy measure

attaining them, are of less value in the eyes of a yamiable woman, than "that meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Natural propensities best mark the designations of providence as to their application. The fin was not clearly bestowed on the fish that he should swim, the wing given to the bird that he should fly, than prior strength of body, and a firmer texture of mind given to man, that he might preside in the deep, daring scenes of action and of council; in the complicated arts of government, in the contention of wars, in the intricacies and depths of science, in the details of commerce, and in those professions which demand an higher reach, and a wider range of powers. The true value of woman is not diminished by the imputation of inferiority in those talents which do not belong to her, or of those qualities in which her claim to silence does not consist. She has other requisites, better adapted to answer the end and purposes of her being, from "HIM who does all things well;" who is the agent to the action; who accommodates the instrument to the work.

Let not then aspiring, because ill-judging woman, with pining envy the keen satyrists, hunting vice through all the doublings and windings of the heart; the sagacious politician, leading senates, and directing the fate of empires; the acute lawyer, detecting the quities of fraud; and the skilful dramatist, exposing the pretensions of folly; but let her ambition be cooled by reflecting, that those who thus excel, to what nature bestows, and books can teach, must add to these, that consummate knowledge of the world to which a delicate woman has no fair avenues, and which, if she could attain, she would never be supposed to have come honestly by.

In almost all that comes under the description of the letters, in all that captivates by imagery, or charms by just and affecting sentiment, women are silent. They possess in a high degree that delicacy, quickness of perception, and that nice discernment between the beautiful and defective, which comes under the denomination of taste. Both in composition

world, as it were, from a little elevation in her den, whence she makes an exact survey of her but takes not in that wider range of distant which he who stands on a loftier eminence co Women have a certain *inst* which often ena to feel what is just, more instantaneously than define it. They have an intuitive penetra character, bellowed on them by Providence, sensitive and tender organs of some timid an a kind of natural guard to warn of the ap danger beings who are often called to act de

In summing up the evidence, if I may so spe different capacities of the sexes, one may venture to assert, that women have equal *parts*, but are *wholeness* of mind, in the integral understand though a superior woman may possess single fa equal perfection, yet there is commonly a just tion in the mind of a superior man: that if wo in an equal degree the faculty of fancy whic images, and the faculty of memory which col stores ideas, they seem not to posses in equal the faculty of comparing, combining, analy separating these ideas; that deep and pacie ing which goes to the bottom of a subject; power of arrangement which knows how to

seductions of extraneous beauty, and will win the
not by excelling in speed, but by despising the

Here it may be justly enough retorted, that, as it is
wed the education of women is so defective, the
dged inferiority of their minds may be accounted
on that ground more justly than by ascribing it to
r natural make. And, indeed, there is so much
h in the remark, that till women shall be more rea-
ably educated, and till the native growth of their
id, shall cease to be stinted and cramped, we have
juster ground for pronouncing that their under-
ding has already reached its highest attainable point,
n the Chinese would have for affirming that their
men have attained to the greatest possible perfection
alking, while the first care is, during their infancy,
ripple their feet. At least, till the female sex are
re carefully instructed, this question will always
ain as undecided as to the *degré* of difference be-
en the masculine and feminine understanding, as
question between the understanding of blacks and
tes; for until men and women, and until Africans

Europeans are put more nearly on a par in the
ivation of their minds, the shades of distinction,
tever they be, between their native abilities can
er be fairly ascertained.

And when we see (and who will deny that we see it
quently?) so many women nobly rising from under
the pressure of a disadvantageous education and a
ective system of society, and exhibiting the most un-
iguous marks of a vigorous understanding, a cor-
judgment, and a sterling piety, it reminds us of
e shining lights which have now and then burst
through all the "darkness visible" of the Romish
rch, have disencumbered themselves from the
om of ignorance, shaken off the fetters of prejudice,
with a noble energy risen superior to all the errors
corrupt theology.

What indisposes even reasonable women to concede in these points
at the weakest man instantly lays hold on the concession; and, on
aereground of sex, plumes himself on his own individual superi-
; inferring that the filliest man is superior to the filliest woman.

neither "rich nor poor," "bond nor free,"
neither "male nor female." In the view of
mortality, which is brought to light by
has no superior. "Women" (to borrow
an excellent prelate) "make up one half
"race; equally with men redeemed by
"Christ." In this their true dignity
their best pretensions rest; here their
are allowed.

All disputes then for pre-eminence
sexes, have only for their object the power
for a few short years, the attention of which
better devoted to the duties of life and of
eternity.

And as the final hope of the female sex
are their present means, perhaps, more favourable
their opportunities, often less obstructed than
the other sex. In their Christian course
every superior advantage, whether we
natural make of their minds, their leisure
tion in youth, or their subsequently less ex-
of life. Their hearts are naturally soft
open to impressions of love and gratitude

aps, more intimately the want of a strength which
 at their own. Christianity brings that superindu-
 trength; it comes in aid of their conscious weak-
 and offers the only true counterpoise to it. "Wo-
 n, be thou healed of thine infirmity," is still the
 -cheering language of a gracious Saviour.

Women also bring to the study of Christianity fewer
 ose prejudices which persons of the other sex too
 early contract. Men, from their classical educa-
 acquire a strong partiality for the manners of Pa-
 antiquity, and the documents of Pagan philoso-
 : this, together with the impure taint caught from
 oose descriptions of their poets, and the licentious
 uage even of their historians, (in whom we rea-
 sily look for more gravity,) often weakens the good
 effusions of young men, and at least confuses their
 of piety, by mixing them with so much hetero-
 ous matter. Their very spirits are imbued all the
 : with the impure follies of a depraved mythology;
 it is well if even on Sundays they can hear of the
 e God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent." While
 en, though struggling with the same natural cor-
 ons, have commonly less knowledge to unlearn,
 fewer schemes to unlearn; they have not to shake
 ie pride of system, and to disencumber their minds

the shackles of favourite theories: they do not
 ; from the porch or the academy any "oppositions
 science" to obstruct their reception of those pure
 rines taught on the Mount: doctrines which
 t to find a readier entrance into minds uninfected
 the pride of the school of Zeno, or the libertinism
 at of Epicurus.

nd as women are naturally more affectionate than
 lions; they are likely both to read and to hear
 a less critical spirit than men: they will not be on
 watch to detect errors; so much as to gather im-
 ement; they have seldom that hardness which is
 ired by dealing deeply in books of controversy, but
 ore inclined to the perusal of works which quicken
 evotional feelings, than to such as awaken a spirit
 ount and scepticism. They are less disposed to
 der the compositions they read. as materials

which to guard against, and answers, than as helps to faith and the love of life. With these advantages, however, they should also bear in mind that their more easily received impressions being often less abiding, and not their souls left open to conviction by means of the strong evidences which call in favour of the truth of Christianity, "they ought therefore, to give the more exact heed to the things which they have heard, lest at any time they should let them slip." Women are also, from their domestic habits, in possession of more leisure and tranquillity for religious pursuits, as well as secured from those difficulties and strong temptations to which men are exposed in the tumult of a bustling world. Their lives are more regular and uniform, less agitated by the passions, the businesses, the contentions, the shock of opinions, and the opposition of interests which divide society, and convulse the world.

If we have denied them the possession of talents which might lead them to excel as lawyers, they are preserved from the peril of having their principles warped by that too indiscriminate defence of right and wrong, to which the professors of the law are exposed. If we should question their title to eminence as mathematicians, they are happily exempt from the danger to which men devoted to that science are said to be liable; namely, that of looking for demonstration on subjects, which by their very nature, are incapable of affording it. If they are less conversant in the powers of nature, the structure of the human frame, and the knowledge of the heavenly bodies, than philosophers, physicians, and astronomers; they are, however, delivered from the error into which many of each of these have sometimes fallen, I mean from the fatal habit of resting in second causes, instead of referring all to the First; instead of making "the heavens declare the glory of God, and proclaim his handy work;" instead of concluding when they observe "how fearfully and wonderfully we are made, marvellous are thy works, O Lord, and that my soul knoweth right well."

And let the weaker sex take comfort, that in their various situation from privileges, which they are some-

times foolishly disposed to envy, consists not only their security, but their happiness. If they enjoy not the distinctions of public life and high offices, do they not scape the responsibility attached to them, and the mortification of being dismissed from them? If they have no voice in deliberative assemblies, do they not avoid the load of duty inseparably connected with such privileges? Preposterous pains have been taken to excite in women an uneasy jealousy that their talents are neither rewarded with public honours, nor emoluments in life; nor with inscriptions, statues, and mausoleums after death. It has been absurdly represented to them as an hardship, that while they are expected to perform duties, they must yet be contented to relinquish honours, and must unjustly be compelled to renounce fame while they must sedulously labour to deserve it.

But for Christian women to act on the low views suggested to them by their ill-judging panegyrist; for Christian women to look up with a giddy head and a throbbing heart to honours and remunerations, so little suited to the wants and capacities of an immortal spirit, would be no less ridiculous than if Christian heroes should look back with envy on the old pagan rewards of ovations, oak garlands, parsley crowns, and aurel wreaths. The Christian hope more than reconciles Christian women to these petty privations, by substituting a nobler prize for their ambition, "the prize of the high-calling of God in Christ Jesus;" by substituting, for that popular and fluctuating voice, which may cry, "Hosanna," and "crucify" in a breath, that "favour of God which is eternal life."

If women should lament it as a disadvantage attached to their sex, that their character is of so delicate a texture as to be sullied by the slightest breath of calumny, and that the stain once received is indelible; yet are they not led by that very circumstance as if instinctively to shrink from all those irregularities to which the loss of character is so certainly expected to be attached; and to shun with keener circumspection the most distant approach towards the confines of danger? Let them not lament it as an hardship, but :

Though it be one main object of this list rather to lower, than to raise any desire of ce-
the female heart; yet I would awaken it to a
libility to honest fame: I would call on wom-
fect that our religion has not only made them
a blessed immortality hereafter, but has great-
them in the scale of being here, by lifting them
importance in society unknown to the most
ages of antiquity. The religion of Christ
bestowed a degree of renown on the sex
what any other religion ever did. Perhaps
hardly so many virtuous women (for I reject
catalogue whom their vices have transferred
lition to infamy) named in all the pages of
Roman History, as are handed down to eter-
in a few of those short chapters with which
Apostle to the Gentiles has concluded his
his converts. Of "devout and honourable"
the sacred scriptures record "not a few."
the most affecting scenes, the most interest-
tions, and the most touching conversations
recorded of the Saviour of the world, pa-
women. *Their* examples have supplied some
most eminent instances of faith and love. *77*
first remarked as having "ministered to him

CHAP. XV.

CONVERSATION.—*Hints suggested on the Subject.—On the Tempers and Dispositions to be introduced in it.—Errors to be avoided.—Vanity under various Shapes the Cause of those Errors.*

THE sexes will naturally desire to appear to each other, such as each believes the other will best like ; their conversation will act reciprocally ; and each sex will wish to appear more or less rational as they perceive it will more or less recommend them to the other. It is therefore to be regretted, that many men, even of distinguished sense and learning, are too apt to consider the society of ladies, as a scene in which they are rather to rest their understandings, than to exercise them ; while ladies, in return, are too much addicted to make their court by lending themselves to this spirit of trifling ; they often avoid making use of what abilities they have ; and affect to talk below their natural and acquired powers of mind ; considering it as a tacit and welcome flattery to the understanding of men, to re- nounce the exercise of their own.

Now since taste and principles thus mutually operate ; men, by keeping up conversation to its proper standard, would not only call into exercise the powers of mind which women actually possess ; but would awaken in them new energies which they do not now they possess ; and men of sense would find their count in doing this, for their own talents would be more highly rated by companions who were better able to appreciate them, and they would be receiving as well as imparting improvement. And on the other hand, young women found it did not often recommend them in the eyes of those whom they most wish to please, to be frivolous and superficial, they would become more sedulous in correcting their own habits. Whenever fashionable women indicate a relish for instructive conversation, men will not be apt to hazard what is vain, or unprofitable ; much less will they ever presume to bring forward what is loose or corrupt,

...the most interesting company which
appears to a travelling student makes
in London, is public men. The one could
the circumstance might serve to bring the
most in a lecture room, and each might
give his own lecture of lively and
various, which is a secondary circumstance
depends on the help, would not decrease in
value by being made of so rational a talk as a
lecture on the minds of women, who
the feeling was one of pleasure, not as a ref-
erence thought or calculating about.

It is a disadvantage even to those women
the best company, and it is unhappily almost
of the system, by the other way of polipo-
ving the instruction almost all the ladies
know; their names being as a kind of sign-
posts of intellect. And in the few cases
it happens that are important illustration in
their progress, they are for the most part con-
fined to the most in human subjects. Some
whenever such happen to be confined to a
richer class with letters, or large back in
further to their own, and the better

or them even to be as shining as they are able;—do we wish to see them take the lead in metaphysical discussions? Do we wish them to plunge into the depths of theological polemics,

And find no end in wandering mazes lost?

do we wish them to revive the animosities of the Banian controversy, or to decide the process between Jesuits and the five propositions of Janfenius? Do we wish to enthrone them in the professor's chair, to hear oracles, harangues, and dissertations? to weigh merits of every new production in the scales of utility, or to regulate the unities of dramatic composition by *Ariosto's clock*? Or renouncing those foreign studies, do we desire to behold them vain of a native independence of soul, inflated with their original power, labouring to strike out sparks of wit, with a restlessness to shine, which generally fails, and with an anxious affectation to please, which never pleases?

Diseurs de bons mots, fades caracteres!

Will this be far from them!—But we *do* wish to see conversation of well-bred women rescued from its common place, from uninteresting tattle, from dull and hackneyed communications, from frivolous jests, from false sensibility, from a warm interest in things of no moment, and an indifference to the most important; from a cold vanity, from still concealed overflowings of self-love, exhibiting itself under the smiling mask of an engaging flattery, from all the factitious manners of artificial intercourse. We *do* wish to see the time passed in polished intelligent society, considered among the beneficial, as well as the pleasant portions of our existence, and not consigned over, as it too frequently is, to premeditated trifling, to empty dullness, to unmeaning levity, to systematic unprofitableness. Let me not, however, be misunderstood: it is not meant to prescribe that ladies should affect to discuss lofty subjects, so much as to suggest that they should bring good sense, simplicity, precision, and truth, to the discussion of those common subjects, of which, after all, both the business

and action they excel in details; but they do not so much generalize their ideas as men, nor do their minds seize a great subject with so large a grasp. They are acute observers, and accurate judges of life and manners, as far as their own sphere of observation extends; but they describe a smaller circle. A woman sees the world, as it were, from a little elevation in her own garden, whence she makes an exact survey of home scenes, but takes not in that wider range of distant prospects which he who stands on a loftier eminence commands. Women have a certain *tact* which often enables them to feel what is just, more instantaneously than they can define it. They have an intuitive penetration into character, bestowed on them by Providence, like the sensitive and tender organs of some timid animals, as a kind of natural guard to warn of the approach of danger beings who are often called to act defensively.

In summing up the evidence, if I may so speak, of the different capacities of the sexes, one may venture perhaps, to assert, that women have equal *parts*, but are inferior in *wholeness* of mind, in the integral understanding: that though a superior woman may possess single faculties in equal perfection, yet there is commonly a juster proportion in the mind of a superior man: that if women have in an equal degree the faculty of fancy which creates images, and the faculty of memory which collects and stores ideas, they seem not to possess in equal measure the faculty of comparing, combining, analysing, and separating these ideas; that deep and patient thinking which goes to the bottom of a subject; nor that power of arrangement which knows how to link a thousand connected ideas in one dependent train, without losing sight of the original idea out of which the rest grow, and on which they all hang. The female too, wanting steadiness in her intellectual pursuits, is perpetually turned aside by her characteristic tastes and feelings. Woman in the career of genius, is the Atalanta, who will risk losing the race by running out of her road to pick up the golden apple; while her male competitor, without, perhaps, possessing greater natural strength or swiftness, will more certainly attain his object, by direct pursuit, by being less exposed to

seductions of extraneous beauty, and will win the
not by excelling in speed, but by despising the

Here it may be justly enough retorted, that, as it is
wed the education of women is so defective, the
dged inferiority of their minds may be accounted
on that ground more justly than by ascribing it to
r natural make. And, indeed, there is so much
h in the remark, that till women shall be more rea-
bly educated, and till the native growth of their
d, shall cease to be stinted and cramped, we have
juster ground for pronouncing that their under-
ding has already reached its highest attainable point,
the Chinese would have for affirming that their
men have attained to the greatest possible perfection
alking, while the first care is, during their infancy,
ripple their feet. At least, till the female sex are
e carefully instructed, this question will always
ain as undecided as to the *degree* of difference be-
en the masculine and feminine understanding, as
question between the understanding of blacks and
res ; for until men and women, and until Africans

Europeans are put more nearly on a par in the
ivation of their minds, the shades of distinction,
tever they be, between their native abilities can
er be fairly ascertained.

And when we see (and who will deny that we see it
quently ?) so many women nobly rising from under
the pressure of a disadvantageous education and a
ective system of society, and exhibiting the most un-
iguous marks of a vigorous understanding, a cor-
judgment, and a sterling piety, it reminds us of
e shining lights which have now and then burst
through all the "darkness visible" of the Romish
rch, have disencumbered themselves from the
om of ignorance, shaken off the fetters of prejudice,
with a noble energy risen superior to all the errors
corrupt theology.

What indisposes even reasonable women to concede in these points
at the weakest man instantly lays hold on the concession ; and, on
ere ground of sex, plumes himself on his own individual superi-
; asserting that the filliest man is superior to the fair rate woman.

ed, that both in reading and conversing, the standing gains more by stretching than stooping; by exerting itself it may not attain to all it desires, but it will be sure to gain something. The mind always applying itself to objects below its level contracts its dimensions, and shrinks itself to the lower of the level, of the object about which it is conversant: while the understanding which is active and aspiring, expands and raises itself stronger by exercise, larger by diffusion, and more by communication.

But the taste of general society is not favourable to improvement. The seriousness with which trifling subjects are agitated, and the levity with which the most serious are dispatched, bear exact proportion to each other. Society too is like a magic lanthorn; the scene is perpetually changing. In this incessant change we must

Catch, ere she fall, the Cynthia of the minute—
and the fashion of the present minute, evanescently like its rapid precursors, while in many instances the cultivation of real knowledge, has also frequently led even the gay and idle to the affect

of application. But where this valuable help is attended merely like any other public exhibition, as a fashionable pursuit, and is not furthered by correspondent reading at home, it often serves to set off the reality of ignorance with the affectation of skill. But instead of producing in conversation a few reigning scientific terms, with a familiarity and readiness, which

Amaze the unlearn'd, and make the learned wise,

would it not be more modest even for those who are better informed, to avoid the common use of technical terms whenever the idea can be as well conveyed without them? For it argues no real ability to know the *names* of tools; the ability lies in knowing their *use*; and while it is in the thing, and not in the term, that real knowledge consists, the charge of pedantry is attached to the use of the term, which would not attach to the knowledge of the science.

In the faculty of speaking well, ladies have such a happy promptitude of turning their slender advantages to account, that there are many who, though they have never been taught a rule of syntax, yet, by a quick facility in profiting from the best books and the best company, hardly ever violate one; and who often exhibit an elegant and perspicuous arrangement of style, without having studied any of the laws of composition. Every kind of knowledge which appears to be the result of observation, reflection, and natural taste, fits gracefully on women. Yet on the other hand it sometimes happens, that ladies of no contemptible natural parts are too ready to produce, not only pedantic expressions, but crude and unfounded notions; and still oftener to bring forward obvious and hackneyed remarks, which float on the very surface of a subject, with the imposing air of recent invention, and all the vanity of conscious discovery. This is because their acquirements have not been worked into their minds by early instruction; what knowledge they have, stands out as it were above the very surface of their minds, like the *appliquée* of the embroiderer, instead of having been interwoven with the growth of the piece,

not, like men, acquire what they know while the texture was forming. Perhaps no better preventive could be devised for this literary vanity, than *early* instruction : that woman would be less likely to be vain of her knowledge who did not remember the time when she was ignorant. Knowledge that is *burnt in*, if I may so speak, is seldom obtrusive, rarely impertinent.

Their reading also has probably consisted much in abridgments from larger works, as was observed in a former chapter ; this makes a readier talker, but a shallower thinker, than the perusal of books of more bulk. By these scanty sketches, their critical spirit has been excited, while their critical powers have not been formed ; for in those crippled mutilations they have seen nothing of that just proportion of parts, that skilful arrangement of the plan, and that artful distribution of the subject, which, while they prove the master hand of the writer, serve also to form the taste of the reader, far more than a disjointed skeleton, or a beautiful feature or two, can do. The instruction of women is also too much drawn from the scanty and penurious sources of short writings of the essay kind : this, when it comprises the best part of a person's reading, makes a smatterer and spoils a scholar ; for though it supplies current talk, yet it does not make a full mind ; it does not furnish a storehouse of materials to stock the understanding, neither does it accustom the mind to any trains of reflection : for the subjects, besides being each succinctly, and, on account of this brevity, superficially treated, are distinct and disconnected : they arise out of no concatenation of ideas, nor any dependent series of deduction. Yet on this pleasant but desultory reading, the mind which has not been trained to severer exercise, loves to repose itself in a sort of creditable indolence, instead of stretching its energies in the wholesome labour of consecutive investigation.*

* The writer cannot be supposed desirous of depreciating the value of those many beautiful periodical essays which adorn our language. But, perhaps, it might be better to regale the mind with them *hugly*, at different times, than to read, at the same sittings, a multitude of short pieces on dissimilar and unconnected topics, *by way of getting through the book*.

am not discouraging study at a late period of life, even censuring slender knowledge ; information is at whatever period and in whatever degree it be acquired. But in such cases it should be attended with peculiar humility : and the new possessor should bear in mind, that what is fresh to her has been long known to others ; and she should therefore be aware of adding as novel that which is common, and obtruding where that which every body possesses. Some ladies are eager to exhibit proofs of their reading, though at the expence of their judgment, and will introduce in conversation quotations quite irrelevant to the matter, and, because they happen at the instant to recur to their recollection, or were, perhaps, found in the book they have just been reading. Unappropriate quotations or strained analogy may shew reading, but they do not shew taste. That just and happy allusion which flows by a word how to awaken a corresponding impression or to excite in the hearer the idea which fills the mind of the speaker, shews less pedantry and more taste than bare citations ; and a mind imbued with elegant knowledge will inevitably betray the opulence of its resources, even on topics which do not relate to science or literature. It is the union of parts and accomplishments, of spirit and modesty, which produces the refinable charm of conversation. Well-informed persons will easily be discovered to have read the best authors, though they are not always detailing lists of authors ; for a muster roll of names may be learnt from a catalogue as well as from the library. Though conversation owes its exquisite taste to the fragrance of the rarest flowers, yet the skill of the little artificer appears in this, that the delicious stores are so admirably mixed up, and there is such a due proportion observed in mixing them, that the perfection of the whole consists in its not tasting individually of the rose, the jessamine, the carnation, or any of those sweets of the variety of all which it is compounded. But true judgment will discover the infusion which true modesty does not display ; and even common subjects passing through a cultivated understanding, borrow a flavour from its richness. A power of apt selection is more val-

more vanity than vivacity, often risk the charge
furdity to escape that of ignorance, and w
compare two authors who are totally unlike
than miss the occasion to shew they have read

Among the arts to spoil conversation son
possess that of suddenly diverting it from the
in which it was beneficially flowing, because so
used by the person who was speaking has acci
struck out a new train of thinking in their own
and not because the general *idea* expressed ha
out a corresponding idea, which sort of collision
deed the way of eliciting the true fire. Youn
whose sprightliness has not been disciplined b
rect education, consider how things may be
said, rather than how they may be prudently
sonably spoken; and willingly hazard being
wrong, or rash, or vain, for the chance of bei
oned pleasant. The graces of rhetoric captiv
more than the justest deductions of reason; w
have no arms they use flowers, and to repel
ment, they arm themselves with a metaphor.
also who do not aim so high as eloquence, a
surprized that you refuse to accept of a prej
stead of a reason: they are not to take up with

the same fault in the mind, strengthened by the error, (a neglected education,) leads lively women to pronounce on a question without examining in any given point they seldomer *doubt* than men; because they are more clear-sighted, but because have not been accustomed to look into a subject enough to discover its depths and its intricacies; not discerning its difficulties, they conclude that it is none. Is it a contradiction to say, that they seem to be quick-sighted and short-sighted? What they see at all, they commonly see at once; a little difficulty discourages them; and, having caught an hasty glimpse of a subject, they rush to this conclusion, that there is no more to be seen, or that what is before will not pay them for the trouble of searching. They pursue their object eagerly, but not regularly; lightly, but not pertinaciously; for they want that obstinate patience of investigation which grows stouter with repulse. What they have not attained, they do not believe exists; what they cannot seize at once, they judge themselves is not worth having.

A subject of moment started in company? While the more sagacious are deliberating on its difficulties, reviewing it under all its aspects, in order to form a competent judgment before they decide; you will often find the most superficial woman present determine the matter, without hesitation. Not seeing the parties in which the question is involved, she won't at the want of penetration in the man whose very reticence keeps him silent. She secretly despises the slow perception and slow decision of him who is patiently *untying* the knot in which she fancies she exhibits her dexterity by *cutting*. By this shallow sprightliness, of which vanity is commonly the radical principle, the most ignorant person in the company leads the conversation, while he whose opinion was best worth hearing, is discouraged from delivering it, and an important subject is dismissed without discussion, by inconsistent flippancy and voluble rashness. It is this abundance of florid talk, from superficial matter, which has brought on so many of the sex the charge of *inverting* the gentleman's precept, and being *swift to speak, slow to hear*.



it as favourites but instruments; her persuasion that present success is no proof of the Divine favour; in short, some intimation that she is not ashamed to desire that her mind is under the influence of Christianity: that she is steadily governed by an unalterable principle, of which no authority is too great to make her ashamed, which no occasion is too trivial to call to exercise. A general concurrence in habitually exhibiting this spirit of decided faith and holy trust, would inconceivably discourage that pert and wakeful fidelity which is ever on the watch to produce itself: and, as we have already observed, if women, who derive authority from their rank or talents, did but reflect how their sentiments are repeated, and how their authority is quoted, they would be so on their guard, that general society might become a scene of profitable communication and common improvement; and the young, who are looking for models on which to fashion themselves, would become ashamed and afraid of exhibiting any thing like levity, or scepticism, or prophaneness.

Let it be understood, that it is not meant to intimate that serious subjects should make up the bulk of conversation; this, as it is impossible, would also often be improper. It is not intended to suggest that they should be abruptly introduced, or unsuitably prolonged; but only that they should not be systematically banned, nor the brand of fashion ever fixed on the person who, with whatever propriety, advocates the introduction of *solid* subjects. However, at this general view, it is evident that the influence of an education, which is not confined to the acquisition of knowledge, but which is directed towards the cultivation of the mind, is of great importance.

though to the suppression of any one in which we ourselves are supposed to excel : and however superior we may be in other respects to the persons in question, we may, perhaps, in that particular point, improve by them, or if we do not gain information, we shall at least gain a wholesome exercise to our humility and self-denial ; we shall be restraining our own impetuosity ; we shall, if we take this course on just occasions only, and so as to beware lest we gratify the vanity of others, be giving confidence to a doubting, or cheerfulness to a depressed spirit. And to place a just remark, hazarded by the diffident, in the most advantageous point of view ; to call the attention of the inattentive, the forward, and the self sufficient, to the unobtrusive merit of some quiet person in the company, who, though of much worth, is perhaps of little note ; these are requisites for conversation, less brilliant, but far more valuable, than the power of exciting bursts of laughter by the brightest wit, or of extorting admiration by the most poignant sallies of ridicule.

Wit is, of all the qualities of the female mind, that which requires the severest castigation ; yet the temperate exercise of this fascinating quality throws an additional lustre round the character of an amiable woman ; for to manage with discreet modesty a dangerous talent, confers an higher praise than can be claimed by those from whom the absence of the talent removes the temptation to misemploy it. To women, wit is a peculiarly perilous possession, which nothing short of the sober-mindedness of Religion can keep in subjection ; and perhaps there is scarcely any one order of human beings that requires the powerful curb of Christian control more than women whose genius has this tendency. Intemperate wit craves admiration as its natural aliment ; it lives on flattery as its daily bread. The professed wit is an hungry beggar, subsisting on the extorted alms of perpetual panegyric ; and like the vulture in the Grecian fable, the appetite increases by indulgence. Simple truth and sober approbation become tasteless and insipid to the palate daily vitiated by the delicious poignancies of exaggerated commendation. Under the above restrictions, how-

wit may be safely and pleasantly exercised ; *buffeted wit* is an elegant and well-bred, and notanine quality. But *humour*, especially if it degenerate into imitation, or mimicry, is very sparingly ventured on ; for it is so difficult totally to de-it from the suspicion of buffoonery, that a woman be likely to lose more of that delicacy which is her appropriate grace, and without which every other qualities its charm, than she will gain in another way e eyes of the judicious, by the most successful display of humour.

woman of genius, if she have true humility, will despise those lesser arts which she may not happen possess, even though she be sometimes put to the of having her superior mental endowments over- ed, while she is held cheap for being destitute of : more ordinary accomplishment. Though the ke of Themistocles * was just to one who thought so great a General and politician should employ his like an effeminate Lutinist, yet he would proba- ave made a different answer if he had happened nderstand music.

it be true that some women are too apt to affect ancy and display in their own discourse, and to rvalue the more humble pretensions of less showy actors ; it must be confessed also, that some of e ordinary abilities are now and then guilty of the site error, and foolishly affect to value themselves ot making use of the understanding they really pos- ; and affect to be thought even more silly than are. They exhibit no small satisfaction in ridic- ing women of high intellectual endowments, while exclaim with much affected humility, and much envy, that " they are thankful *they* are not geni- es." Now, though we are glad to hear gratitude essed on any occasion, yet the want of sense is re- no such great mercy to be thankful for ; and it ld indicate a better spirit, were they to pray to be led to make a right use of the moderate under-

* Can you play on the lute ?" said a certain Athenian to Themis-
; " No," replied he, " but I can make a little village a great

standing they possess, than to expose with a too visible pleasure the imaginary or real defects of their own shining acquaintance. Women of the brightest faculties should not only "bear those faculties meekly," but should consider it as no derogation, cheerfully to fulfil those humbler offices which make up the business and the duties of common life, while they should always take into the account the nobler exertions as well as the higher responsibility attached to higher gifts. In the mean time women of lower attainments should exert to the utmost such abilities as Providence has assigned them; and while they should not deride excellencies which are above their reach, they should not despond at an inferiority which did not depend on themselves; nor, because God has denied them great talents, should they forget that they are equally responsible for the one he *has* allotted them, but set about devoting that one with humble diligence to the glory of the Giver.

Vanity, however, is not the monopoly of talents. Let not a young lady, therefore, fancy that she is humble, merely because she is not ingenious, or consider the absence of talents as the criterion of worth. Humility is not the exclusive privilege of dullness. Folly is as conceited as wit, and ignorance many a time outstrips knowledge in the race of vanity. Equally earnest competitions spring from causes less worthy to excite them than wit and genius. Vanity insinuates itself into the female heart under a variety of unsuspected forms, and is on the watch to enter it by seizing on many a little pass which was not thought worth guarding.

Who has not seen as restless emotion agitate the features of an anxious matron, while peace and fame hung trembling in doubtful suspense on the success of a soup or a sauce, on which sentence was about to be pronounced by some consummate critic, as could have been excited by any competition for literary renown, or any struggle for contested wit? Anxiety for fame is by no means measured by the real value of the object pursued, but by the degree of estimation in which it is held by the pursuer. Nor was the illustrious hero

Greece more effectually hindered from sleeping by trophies of Miltiades, than many a modish damsel the eclipsing superiority of some newer decoration libited by her more successful friend.

There is another species of vanity in some women which disguises itself under the thin veil of an affected humility; they will accuse themselves of some fault in which they are remarkably exempt, and lament want of some talent which they are rather notorious for possessing. Now though the wisest are commonly the most humble, and those who are freest from faults are most forward in confessing error; yet the advice we are censuring is not only a clumsy trap for life, but there is a disingenuous intention, by renouncing a quality they eminently possess, to gain credit for others in which they are really deficient.

Affectation involves a species of deceit. The apostle when he enjoins, "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought," does not exhort us to think *falsely* of ourselves, but to think "soberly;" and it is worth observing that in this injunction he does not use the word *speak*, but *think*, inferring possibly, that it would be safer to *speak* little of ourselves or not at all; it is so far from being an unequivocal proof of our humility to talk even of our defects, that while we make *self* the subject, (in whatever way,) self-love continues to be gratified, and will even be content that our faults should be talked of, rather than that we should be talked of at all. Some are also attacked with high proud fits of humility, that while they are ready to accuse themselves of almost every sin in the lump, they yet take fire at the imputation of the slightest individual fault; and instantly enter upon their own justification as warmly as if you, and not themselves, had brought forward the charge. The truth is, they are disposed to condemn themselves, in the full confidence that you would contradict their self-accusation; the thing they intended was that you should believe them, and they are never so much piqued and disappointed as when they are taken at their word.

Of the various shapes and undefined forms into which vanity branches out in conversation, there is no

whether the claim only the second-hand remembrance of having happened to her friend, or the still greater celebrity of its having been witnessed only by her friend: but even though that friend only a man, who remembered the woman, who conversed with the person, who actually beheld the thing, is now causing admiration in the company, though in a fainter degree, is brought into notice, the relater contrives in some circuitous and distant way to be connected with the wonder.

To correct this propensity "to elevate and exalt,"* it would be well in mixed society to be altogether free from hazarding stories, which though they may not be absolutely false, yet lying without the sanction of probability, are apt to impeach the credit of the relator; in whom the very consciousness that he is not believed, excites an increased eagerness to do so, and to go farther from the soberness of truth, and in the habit of vehement asseveration, which is too often used in to help out a questionable point.† If this propensity be irresistible, I would recommend persons who are much addicted to relate doubtful, improbable, or wonderful circumstances, to

into a lump, under the general name of *Strange Reports*. May we not suspect that, in some instances, the power of strange reports would be a bulky one? There is another shape, and a very deformed shape, in which loquacious vanity shews itself: I mean betraying of confidence. Though the act be generous, yet the fault, in the first instance, is not generosity, but vanity. It does not so often spring from the mischievous desire of divulging a secret, as from the pride of having been trusted with it. It is a secret inclination of mixing *self* with whatever is important. The secret would be of little value, if the telling it did not serve to intimate *our* connexion with the pleasure of its having been deposited with us. It would be nothing, if others may not know that it has been so deposited.—When we continue to see the variety of serious evils which this principle involves, shall we persist in asserting that vanity is a slender mischief? There is one offence committed in conversation of which too serious a nature to be overlooked, or to be inadvertent on without sorrow and indignation: It is the habitual and thoughtless profaneness of those who are repeatedly invoking their Maker's name on occasions the most trivial. It is offensive in all its variety of aspects;—it is very pernicious in its *effects*;—it is a *long* evil;—those who are most guilty of it, are in a habit hardly conscious when they do it; are not aware of the sin; and for both these reasons, without admonitions of faithful friendship, are little likely to discontinue it.—It is utterly *INEXCUSABLE*;—it has none of the palliatives of *temptation* which other vices possess, and in that respect stands distinguished from all others both in its nature and degree of guilt.—Like every other sin, however, it is at once cause and effect; it *proceeds* from want of love and reverence to the great Being, and *causes* the want of that love both in ourselves and others. Yet with all those aggravations, there is, perhaps, hardly any sin so frequently committed, so slightly censured, so seldom repented of, so little guarded against. On the score of *impropriety*, too, it is additionally offensive, as being utterly repugnant to female delicacy, which often does not

good breeding ; for those who commit it, I of the pain they are inflicting on the soul which is deeply wounded when it hears a name it loves dishonoured ; and it is as good breeding to give pain, as it is to true profane. It is astonishing that the refined should not reprobate this practice for its and vulgarity, as much as the pious abhor its sinfulness.

I would endeavour to give some faint idea of the grossness of this offence, by an analogy, (inadequate !) with which the feeling heart, though not seasoned with religion, may yet be struck. To such I would earnestly say :—Suppose some beloved friend—to put the case still more fully, a departed friend—a revered parent, whose image never occurs without awakening bosom sentiments of tender love and lively joy ; how would you feel if you heard this honoured name *bandied about* with unfeeling familiarity and levity ; or at best, thrust into every pause of a vulgar expletive ? Does not your affection recoil at the thought ? And yet the hallowe

name is used indiscriminately to express anger, joy, grief, surprize, impatience : and what is almost still more unpardonable than all, it is wantonly used as a mere unmeaning expletive, which, being excited by no temptation, can have nothing to extenuate it ; which, causing no emotion, can have nothing to recommend it, unless it be the pleasure of the sin.

Among the deep, but less obvious mischiefs of conversation, *misrepresentation* must not be overlooked. Self-love is continually at work, to give to all we say a bias in our own favour. The counteraction of this fault should be set about in the earliest stages of education. If young persons have not been discouraged in the natural, but evil propensity to relate every dispute they have had with others to their own advantage ; if they have not been trained to the bounden duty of doing justice even to those with whom they are at variance ; if they have not been led to aim at a complete impartiality in their little narratives, and instructed never to take advantage of the absence of the other party, in order to make the story lean to their own side more than the truth will admit, how shall we in advanced life look for correct habits, for unprejudiced representations, for fidelity, accuracy, and unbiassed justice ?

Yet, how often in society, otherwise respectable, are we pained with narrations in which prejudice warps, and self-love blinds ! How often do we see, that withholding part of a truth answers the worst ends of a falsehood ! How often regret the unfair turn given to a cause, by placing a sentiment in one point of view, which the speaker had used in another ! the letter of truth preserved where its spirit is violated ! a superstitious exactness scrupulously maintained in the underparts of a detail, in order to impress such an idea of integrity as shall gain credit for the *misrepresentator*, while he is designedly mistating the leading principle. How may we observe a new character given to a fact by a different look, tone, or emphasis, which alters it as much as words could have done ! the false impression of a sermon conveyed, when we do not like the preacher, or when through him we wish to make religion itself ridiculous ; the care to avoid literal untruths,

him who had only brought it forward in order to pose it! the relating opinions which had been put hypothetically, as if they were the avowals of him we would discredit! that subtle which is so made to incorporate with a certain of truth, that the most skilful moral chymist cannot analyse or separate them! for a good man knows that a successful lie must have a certain portion of truth, or it will not go down. And verisimilitude is the test of his skill; as too much truth would defeat the end of his mischief; and too much would destroy the belief of the hearer. All definable ambiguity and equivocation; all that is deceit, which is rather implied than expressed; more delicate artifices of the school of Loyola and Chesterfield, which allow us when we dare not tell the truth, yet so to disguise and discolour it that the truth we relate shall not resemble the truth we know. These and all the thousand shades of simulation and dissimulation will be carefully guarded against by the conversation of vigilant Christians.

Again, it is surprising to mark the communications from strict veracity which spring, not from a conformity to truth, not from intentional deceit, not from malevolence or envy, not from the least des

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youth are apt to set up for themselves, and is too much disposed to be his own legislator, looking to the established law of the land as a standard; and to set up for his own divine without to the revealed will of God as his rule—by equally vicious with our vanity, we are also constantly led to *give* the latitude we *take*: and it is too frequent a practice in our *tolerating* youth when speaking of their more erring and misfortunate to offer for them this flimsy vindication, “they do is right if it appear right to *them*:” “see the thing in that light, and act up to it.” “if ity, they cannot be materially wrong.” The standard of truth, justice, and religion, must be elevated nor depressed, in order to accommodate to actual circumstances; it must never be palliate error, to justify folly, or to vindicate. Good-natured young people often speak favourably, or extravagantly of common things from one of these motives; either their own excellence are low, or they speak respectfully deserving, to purchase for themselves the respect, tenderness and generosity; or they lavish

honest way of obtaining the good we desire, is
 into the false and popular notion of a good, and
 mistake, when speaking of good. Good is not
 ! True Christian conduct cannot be a good, and
 is not even a virtue. It is merely a duty, and
 is the evil which may bring us a reward, but it
 is not a virtue to be the good which it is
 correct this propensity to false judgment, and
 it, it would be well to bear in mind, that the
 action, done from what seems to be a good
 quality, but it is done in what is not a
 ves its fair proportion of good and
 indation ; yet no character is more to be
 the word, which is not a character.
 In five—no remuneration what has been done.
 ne additional bias.—Duty is a principle, and
 dual and moral improvement of a person, and
 ur to bring into it a selfishness, which is
 d to be watchful over yourself ; but
 y prominent talent of your own, which
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 y to bring their modest virtues into
 ow any one pretends to possess any
 ly or infirmity, never enable you to
 inventing occasions which may
 betray it ; but give as far as you can
 the follies which appear, and kindly
 tep the rest out of sight. Never profess
 amour, by hazarding what you suspect
 y present, in their private conversations,
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 ought at this expense. Give credit to
 without your kindness will get more
 ny one whom you dare not talk to
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 either to shine nor to triumph ; and if
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 fluence you may gain by pleasing, to be
 tra. Cultivate true piety, for it is
 one principle, and is consistent with

and the duties of common life, while they always take into the account the nobler exertion as the higher responsibility attached to high. In the mean time women of lower attainments exert to the utmost such abilities as Providence signed them; and while they should not derelictencies which are above their reach, they should respond at an inferiority which did not do themselves; nor, because God has denied talents, should they forget that they are equally fible for the one he *has* allotted them, but devoting that one with humble diligence to the of the Giver.

Vanity, however, is not the monopoly of Let not a young lady, therefore, fancy that she ble, merely because she is not ingenious, or the absence of talents as the criterion of worth. Ill-millity is not the exclusive privilege of dullness is as conceited as wit, and ignorance many a strips knowledge in the race of vanity. Equallest competitions spring from causes less worth cite them than wit and genius. Vanity insinself into the female heart under a variety of used forms, and is on the watch to enter it by on many a little pass which was not thought

Freece more effectually hindered from sleeping by trophies of Miltiades, than many a modish damsel by the eclipsing superiority of some newer decoration bit by her more successful friend.

There is another species of vanity in some women which disguises itself under the thin veil of an affected humility; they will accuse themselves of some fault in which they are remarkably exempt, and lament the want of some talent which they are rather notorious for possessing. Now though the wisest are commonly the most humble, and those who are freest from faults are most forward in confessing error; yet the vice we are censuring is not only a clumsy trap for itself, but there is a disingenuous intention, by renouncing a quality they eminently possess, to gain credit for others in which they are really deficient.

Affectation involves a species of deceit. The little when he enjoins, "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought," does not exhort us to *think falsely* of ourselves, but to think "soberly;" and it is worth observing that in this injunction he does not use the word *say*, but *think*, inferring possibly, that it would be safer to *say* little of ourselves or not at all; it is so far from being an unequivocal proof of our inability to talk even of our defects, that while we are *self* the subject, (in whatever way,) self-love condescends to be gratified, and will even be content that our faults should be talked of, rather than that we should be talked of at all. Some are also attacked with a proud fits of humility, that while they are ready to accuse themselves of almost every sin in the lump, they yet take fire at the imputation of the slightest *individual* fault; and instantly enter upon their own justification as warmly as if you, and not themselves, had brought forward the charge. The truth is, they are flattered to condemn themselves, in the full confidence that you would contradict their self-accusation; the thing they intended was that you should believe in them, and they are never so much piqued and disappointed as when they are taken at their word.

Of the various shapes and undefined forms into which vanity branches out in conversation, there is no

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see the turpitude of this sin, while it affects to be shocked at swearing in a man. Now this species of profaneness is not only swearing, but, perhaps, in some respects, swearing of the worst sort; as it is a *direct* breach of an express command, and offends against the *very letter* of that law which says in so many words, THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN. It offends against politeness and *good breeding*; for those who commit it, little think of the pain they are inflicting on the sober mind, which is deeply wounded when it hears the holy name it loves dishonoured; and it is as contrary in good breeding to give pain, as it is to true piety to be profane. It is astonishing that the refined and elegant should not reprobate this practice for its coarseness and vulgarity, as much as the pious abhor it for its sinfulness.

I would endeavour to give some faint idea of the grossness of this offence, by an analogy, (O! how inadequate!) with which the feeling heart, even though not seasoned with religion, may yet be touched. To such I would earnestly say:—Suppose you had some beloved friend—to put the case still more strongly, a departed friend—a revered parent, perhaps—whose image never occurs without awaking in your bosom sentiments of tender love and lively gratitude; how would you feel if you heard this honoured name *bandied about* with unfeeling familiarity and indecent levity; or at best, thrust into every pause of speech as a vulgar expletive? Does not your affectionate heart recoil at the thought? And yet the hallowed name of your truest Benefactor, your heavenly Father, your best Friend, to whom you are indebted for all you enjoy; who gives you those very friends in whom you so much delight, those very talents with which you dishonour him, those very organs of speech with which you blaspheme him, is treated with an irreverence, a contempt, a wantonness, with which you cannot bear the very thought or mention of treating a human friend. His name is impiously, is unfeelingly, is ungratefully singled out as the object of decided irreverence, of systematic contempt, of thoughtless levity. His sacred

name is used indiscriminately to express anger, joy, grief, surprize, impatience; and what is almost still more unpardonable than all, it is wantonly used as a mere unmeaning expletive, which, being excited by no temptation, can have nothing to extenuate it; which, causing no emotion, can have nothing to recommend it, unless it be the pleasure of the sin.

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honest way of obtaining the praise of candour, to get into the soft and popular habit of saying of all their acquaintance, when speaking of them, that *they are so and so*? True Christian candour conceals faults, but it does not invent virtues. It tenderly forbears to expose the evil which may belong to a character, but it does not ascribe to it the good which does not exist. To correct this propensity to false judgment and insincerity, it would be well to bear in mind, that while every good action, come from what source it may, and every good quality, be it found in whomsoever it will, deserves its fair proportion of distinct and willing commendation; yet no character is good, in the true sense of the word, which is not RELIGIOUS.

In fine—to recapitulate what has been said, with some additional hints:—Study to promote both intellectual and moral improvement in conversation; labour to bring into it a disposition to bear with others, and to be watchful over yourself; keep out of sight your prominent talent of your own, which, if indulged, might discourage or oppress the feeble-minded; and try to bring their modest virtues into notice. If you know any one present to possess any particular weakness or infirmity, never exercise your wit by maliciously inventing occasions which may lead her to expose or betray it; but give as favourable a turn as you can to the follies which appear, and kindly help her to keep the rest out of sight. Never gratify your own humour, by hazarding what you suspect may wound any present, in their persons, connections, professions of life, or religious opinions; and do not forget to examine whether the laugh your wit has raised be never bought at this expence. Give credit to those who, without your kindness will get none; do not talk at any one whom you dare not talk *to*, unless from motives in which the golden rule will bear you out. Seek neither to shine nor to triumph; and if you seek to ease, take care that it be in order to convert the influence you may gain by pleasing, to the good of others. Cultivate true politeness, for it grows out of the principle, and is consistent with the Gospel of Christ; but avoid those feigned attentions which are

as Truth is in mind; and could Truth manifest itself, she would appear invested in Simplicity.

Remember also, that true Christian goodness is the soul, of which politeness is only the garb; not that artificial quality which is taken up when they go into society, in order to charm the eye; it is not their particular business to please; and when they return home to those to whom their appearance is a real duty. It is not that false but deceitful softness, which after having acted a hundred scenes of the most lively sympathy and interest with every slight acquaintance; after exhausting every phrase of feeling, for the trifles or petty sorrows of multitudes who are unknown, leaves it doubtful whether a grain of feeling or genuine sympathy be reserved for the nearest connexions; and which dismisses a woman to her immediate friends with little affection, and to her family with little attachment.

True good-nature, that which alone deserves the name, is not a holiday ornament, but an everyday habit. It does not consist in servile complaisance, in dishonest flattery, or affected sympathy, or unfeeling assent, or unwarrantable compliance, or eternal acquiescence. Before it can be allowed to rank with the virtues,

on, and wear its honours; but they assume the ours of a triumph, without the merit of a victory; politeness subdues nothing, and insensibility has ing to subdue. Good-nature of the true cast, under the foregoing regulations, is above all price he common intercourse of domestic society; for rdinary quality, which is constantly brought into on by the perpetually recurring though minute ts of daily life, is of higher value than more bril- qualities which are less frequently called into use: small pieces of ordinary current coin are of more ortance in the commerce of the world than the als of the antiquary. And, indeed, Christianity given that new turn to the character of all the vir-, that perhaps it is the best test of the excellence of y, that they have little brilliancy in them. The istian Religion has degraded some splendid quali- from the rank they held, and elevated those which e obscure into distinction.

CHAP. XVI.

On the Danger of an Ill-directed Sensibility.

considering the human mind with a view to its rovement, it is prudent to endeavour to discover natural bent of the individual character; and having ad it, to direct your force against that side on which warp lies, that you may lessen by counteraction, the et which you might be promoting, by applying r aid in a contrary direction. But the misfortune eople who mean better than they judge, are apt to up a set of general rules, good perhaps in them- es, and originally gleaned from experience and ob- ation on the nature of human things, but not appli- le in all cases. These rules they keep by them as truments of universal efficacy, which they therefore n bring out for uses in such cases to which they ot apply. For to make any remedy effectual, it ot enough to know the medicine, you must study e constitution also; if there be not a congruity be-

tween the two, you may be injuring one patient by the means which are requisite to raise and restore another.

In forming the female character it is of importance that those on whom the task devolves should possess so much penetration as accurately to discern the degree of sensibility, and so much judgment as to accommodate the treatment to the individual character. By constantly stimulating and extolling feelings naturally quick, those feelings will be rendered too acute and irritable. On the other hand, a calm and equable temper will become obtuse by the total want of excitement; the former treatment converts the feelings into a source of error, agitation, and calamity; the latter starves their native energy, deadens the affections, and produces a cold, dull, selfish spirit; for the human mind is an instrument which will lose its sweetness if strained too high, and will be deprived of its tone and strength if not sufficiently raised.

It is cruel to chill the precious sensibility of an ingenuous soul, by treating with supercilious coldness and unfeeling ridicule every indication of a warm, tender, disinterested, and enthusiastic spirit, as if it exhibited symptoms of a deficiency in understanding or in prudence. How many are apt to intimate, with a smile of mingled pity and contempt, in considering such a character, that when she knows the world, that is, in other words, when she shall be grown cunning, selfish, and suspicious, she will be ashamed of her present glow of honest warmth, and of her lovely susceptibility of heart. May she never know the world, if the knowledge of it must be acquired at such an expence! But to sensible hearts, every indication of genuine feeling will be dear, for they well know that it is this temper which, by the guidance of the Divine Spirit, may make her one day become more enamoured of the beauty of holiness; which, with the co-operation of principle, and under its direction will render her the lively agent of Providence in diminishing the misery that is in the world; into which misery this temper will give her a quicker intuition than colder characters possess. It is this temper which, when it is

shed and purified by a "live coal from the altar,"* give her a keener taste for the spirit of religion, a quicker zeal in discharging its duties. But let it be remembered likewise, that as there is no quality in female character which more raises its tone, so there is none which will be so likely to endanger the same, and to expose the virtue of the possessor; none which requires to have its luxuriances more carefully checked, and its wild shoots more closely lopped.

For young women of affections naturally warm, not carefully disciplined, are in danger of incurring an unnatural irritability; and while their happiness falls a victim to the excess of uncontrolled feelings, they are liable at the same time to indulge a vanity of all others the most preposterous, that of being conscious of their very defect. They have heard sensibility highly commended, without having heard any thing of its bounds and fences which were intended to confine it, and without having been imbued with that principle which would have given it a beneficial direction. Conscious that they possess the quality itself in an extreme, and not aware that they want all that makes that quality safe and delightful, they plunge headlong into those sins and miseries from which they excitedly and ignorantly imagine, that not principle, but coldness, has preserved the more sober-minded and well-instructed of their sex.

As it would be foreign to the present design to expatiate on those criminal excesses which are some of the effects of ungoverned passion, it is only intended to hazard a few remarks on those lighter consequences of it which consist in the loss of comfort with the ruin of character, and occasion the privation of much of the happiness of life, without involving any censurable degree of guilt or discredit. It may, however, be incidentally remarked, and let it be carefully remembered, that if no women have risen so high on the scale of moral excellence as those whose natural growth has been conscientiously governed by its true principle, and directed to its true end; so none have fur-

* Isaiah vi. 6.
S

nished such deplorable instances of extreme depravity as those who, through the ignorance, or the dereliction of principle, have been abandoned by the excess of the very temper to the violence of ungoverned passions, and uncontrolled inclinations. Perhaps, if we were to inquire into the remote cause of some of the blackest crimes which stain the annals of mankind, profligacy, murder, and especially suicide, we might trace them back to this original principle, an ungoverned Sensibility.

Notwithstanding all the fine theories in prose and verse to which this topic has given birth, it will be found that very exquisite sensibility contributes so little to *happiness*, and may yet be made to contribute so much to *usefulness*, that it may perhaps, be generally considered as bestowed for an exercise to the possessor's own virtue, and at the same time, as a keen instrument with which he may better work for the good of others.

Women of this cast of mind are less careful to avoid the charge of unbounded extremes, than to escape in all events the imputation of insensibility. They are little alarmed at the danger of *exceeding*, though terrified at the suspicion of *coming short*, of what they take to be the extreme point of feeling. They will even resolve to prove the warmth of their sensibility, though at the expence of their judgment, and sometimes also of their justice. Even when they earnestly desire to *be*, and to *do* good, they are apt to employ the wrong instrument to accomplish the right end. They employ the passions to do the work of the judgment; forgetting, or not knowing, that the passions were not given us to be used in the search and discovery of truth, which is the office of a cooler and more discriminating faculty; but to animate us to warmer zeal in the pursuit and practice of truth, when the judgment shall have pointed out what *is* truth.

Through this natural warmth, which they have been justly told is so pleasing, but which perhaps, they have not been told will be continually exposing them to peril and to suffering, their joys and sorrows are excessive. Of this extreme irritability, as was before remarked, the ill-educated learn to boast as if it were a decided indication of superiority of soul, instead of li-

ring to restrain it as the excess of a temper which
 ses to be amiable, when it is no longer under the
 itrol of the governing faculty. It is misfortune
 ough to be born more liable to suffer and to sin,
 m this conformation of mind ; it is too much to
 rish the evil by unrestrained indulgence ; it is still
 rse to be proud of so misleading a quality.

Flippancy, impetuosity, resentment, and violence of
 it, grow out of this disposition, which will be rath-
 -promoted than corrected, by the system of educa-
 -on which we have been animadverting ; in which
 em, emotions are too early and too much excited,
 tastes and feelings are considered as too exclusively
 king up the whole of the female character ; in
 ch the judgment is little exercised, the reasoning
 vers are seldom brought into action, and self-knowl-
 e and self-denial scarcely included.

The propensity of mind which we are considering,
 nchecked, lays its possessors open to unjust preposi-
 -ions, and exposes them to all the danger of unsound-
 -attachments. In early youth, not only love at first
 t, but also friendship, of the same instantaneous
 with, springs up from an ill-directed sensibility ;
 in after-life, women under the powerful influence
 his temper, conscious that they have much to be
 ie with, are too readily inclined to select for their
 fidential connections, flexible and flattering com-
 -ions, (who will indulge, and perhaps admire their
 ts,) rather than firm and honest friends, who will
 ove and would assist in curing them. We may
 t it as a general maxim, that an obliging, weak,
 ling, complaisant friend, full of small attentions,
 a little religion, little judgment, and much natural
 -iescence and civility, is a most dangerous, though
 -rally a too much desired confidante : she soothes
 indolence, and gratifies the vanity of her friend, by
 nciling her to her faults, while she neither keeps
 understanding nor the virtues of that friend in ex-
 se ; but withholds from her every useful truth,
 ch by opening her eyes might give her pain. These
 quious qualities are "the soft green"* on which

* *Beauty is the soft green and the soft green*

young people are apt to set up for themselves, and he is too much disposed to be his own legislator, looking to the established law of the land as a standard; and to set up for his own divine without regard to the revealed will of God as his rule—by an equally vicious with our vanity, we are also constantly led to *give* the latitude we *take*: and it is too frequent a practice in our *tolerating* young men when speaking of their more erring and misguided friends to offer for them this flimsy vindication, “they do is right if it appear right to *them*!” “see the thing in that light, and act up to it with us,” “if it is so, they cannot be materially wrong.” The standard of truth, justice, and religion, must not be elevated nor depressed, in order to accommodate to actual circumstances; it must never be lowered to palliate error, to justify folly, or to vindicate the wrong. Good-natured young people often speak favorably of unworthy, or extravagantly of common characters from one of these motives; either their own excellences are low, or they speak respectfully of the deserving, to purchase for themselves the respect, tenderness and generosity; or they lavish praise on almost all alike, in the insidious hope of bringing back universal commendation in return.

an honest way of obtaining the praise of candour, to get into the soft and popular habit of saying of all their acquaintance, when speaking of them, that *they are so good!* True Christian candour conceals faults, but it does not invent virtues. It tenderly forbears to expose the evil which may belong to a character, but it dares not ascribe to it the good which does not exist. To correct this propensity to false judgment and insincerity, it would be well to bear in mind, that while every good action, come from what source it may, and every good quality, be it found in whomsoever it will, deserves its fair proportion of distinct and willing commendation; yet no character is good, in the true sense of the word, which is not RELIGIOUS.

In fine—to recapitulate what has been said, with some additional hints:—Study to promote both intellectual and moral improvement in conversation; labour to bring into it a disposition to bear with others, and to be watchful over yourself; keep out of sight any prominent talent of your own, which, if indulged, might discourage or oppress the feeble-minded; and try to bring their modest virtues into notice. If you know any one present to possess any particular weakness or infirmity, never exercise your wit by maliciously inventing occasions which may lead her to expose or betray it; but give as favourable a turn as you can to the follies which appear, and kindly help her to keep the rest out of sight. Never gratify your own humour, by hazarding what you suspect may wound any present, in their persons, connections, professions in life, or religious opinions; and do not forget to examine whether the laugh your wit has raised be never bought at this expence. Give credit to those who, without your kindness will get none; do not talk *at* any one whom you dare not talk *to*, unless from motives in which the golden rule will bear you out. Seek neither to shine nor to triumph; and if you seek to please, take care that it be in order to convert the influence you may gain by pleasing, to the good of others. Cultivate true politeness, for it grows out of true principle, and is consistent with the Gospel of Christ; but avoid those feigned attentions which are

as Truth is in mind; and could Truth make visible, she would appear invested in Simplicity.

Remember also, that true Christian good is in the soul, of which politeness is only the garb, not that artificial quality which is taken up when they go into society, in order to charm those it is not their particular business to please; and down when they return home to those to whom plainness is a real duty. It is not that false but deceitful softness, which after having acted a hundred scenes of the most lively sympathy and interest with every slight acquaintance; after exhausted every phrase of feeling, for the trifles or petty sorrows of multitudes who are known, leaves it doubtful whether a grain of feeling or genuine sympathy be reserved for the connexions: and which dismisses a woman to her immediate friends with little affection, and to her family with little attachment.

True good-nature, that which alone deserves the name, is not a holiday ornament, but an ever habit. It does not consist in servile complaisance, dishonest flattery, or affected sympathy, or unqualified assent, or unwarrantable compliance, or eternal acquiescence. Before it can be allowed to rank with the virtues, it must be wrought up from a humour into a prin-

and wear its honours; but they assume the airs of a triumph, without the merit of a victory; politeness subdues nothing, and insensibility has nothing to subdue. Good-nature of the true cast, under the foregoing regulations, is above all price in the common intercourse of domestic society; for its ordinary quality, which is constantly brought into use by the perpetually recurring though minute concerns of daily life, is of higher value than more brilliant qualities which are less frequently called into use: small pieces of ordinary current coin are of more importance in the commerce of the world than the hoards of the antiquary. And, indeed, Christianity gives that new turn to the character of all the virtues, that perhaps it is the best test of the excellence of those that they have little brilliancy in them. The Christian Religion has degraded some splendid qualities from the rank they held, and elevated those which were obscure into distinction.

CHAP. XVI.

On the Danger of an Ill-directed Sensibility.

In considering the human mind with a view to its improvement, it is prudent to endeavour to discover the natural bent of the individual character; and having discovered it, to direct your force against that side on which it warps, lies, that you may lessen by counteraction, the effect which you might be promoting, by applying aid in a contrary direction. But the misfortune of those people who mean better than they judge, are apt to lay up a set of general rules, good perhaps in themselves, and originally gleaned from experience and observation on the nature of human things, but not applicable in all cases. These rules they keep by them as the ruins of universal efficacy, which they therefore never bring out for uses in such cases to which they do not apply. For to make any remedy effectual, it is not enough to know the medicine, you must study the constitution also; if there be not a congruity be-

of real tenderness, it can not see your real danger of death we love! How do what is being the little nation! * That that is a tender in some heart, but then that is a false heart, and that not better to open its eyes than tenderly which looks even the going what it loves in a momentary pang, I tell the last possibility, that the object of its affection may not be the object of its love. Let it shrink from the last conviction, the * sister friend with whom it has never been in going down to the gates of death, sweeps goodness, and get concerned!

But more human sensibility gives a new work. Not being able to give its friend leaving her faults, or of knowing her danger itself up into the quieting delusion that no ill, at least not for the objects of its own it gratifies itself by imagining a salvation so close as shall take in all itself loves with all it it creates to its own fond heart an ideal attended divine mercy, which shall pardon and in whom this blind sensibility has an interest that has not a shadow of its own.

we neglect his favours, and slight his mercies : this would wear out any earthly kindness. He forgives us, not petty neglects, not occasional slights, but grievous sins, repeated offences, broken vows, and unrequited love. What human friendship performs offices so calculated to touch the soul of sensibility ?

Those young women in whom feeling is indulged to the exclusion of reason and examination, are peculiarly liable to be the dupes of prejudice, rash decisions, and false judgment. The understanding having but little power over the will, their affections are not well poised, and their minds are kept in a state ready to be acted upon by the fluctuations of alternate impulses ; by sudden and varying impressions ; by casual and contradictory circumstances ; and by emotions excited by every accident. Instead of being guided by the broad views of general truth, instead of having one fixed principle, they are driven on by the impetuosity of the moment. And this impetuosity blinds the judgment as much as it misleads the conduct ; so that for want of an habit of cool investigation and inquiry, they meet every event without any previously formed opinion, or settled rule of action. And as they do not accustom themselves to appreciate the real value of things, their attention is as likely to be led away by the under parts of a subject, as to seize on the leading feature. The same eagerness of mind which hinders the operation of the discriminating faculty, leads also to the error of determining on the rectitude of an action by its success, and to that of making the event of an undertaking decide on its justice or propriety : it also leads to that superficial and erroneous way of judging which fastens on exceptions, if they make in our own favour, as grounds of reasoning, while they lead us to overlook received and general rules which tend to establish a doctrine contrary to our wishes.

Open-hearted, indiscreet girls, often pick up a few strong notions, which are as false in themselves as they are popular among the class in question : such as that “ warm friends must make warm enemies ; ”—that “ the generous love and hate with all their hearts ; ”—that “ a reformed rake makes the best husband ; ”

—that “there is no medium in marriage, but that it is
“a state of exquisite happiness, or exquisite misery ;
with many other doctrines of equal currency, and equal
soundness ! These they consider as axioms, and adopt
as rules of life. From the two first of these oracular
sayings, girls are in no small danger of becoming un-
just through the very warmth of their hearts : for they
will acquire an habit of making their estimate of the
good or ill qualities of others, merely in proportion to
the greater or less degree of kindness which they them-
selves have received from them. Their estimation of
general character is thus formed on insulated and par-
tial grounds ; on the accidental circumstance of per-
sonal predilection, or personal pique. Kindness to
themselves or their friends involves all possible excel-
lence ; neglect, all imaginable defects. Friendship and
gratitude can and should go a great way ; but as they
cannot convert vice into virtue, so they ought never
to convert truth into falsehood. And it may be the
more necessary to be upon our guard in this instance,
because the very idea of gratitude may mislead us, by
converting injustice into the semblance of a virtue.
Warm expressions should therefore be limited to the
conveying a sense of our own individual obligations
which are real, rather than employed to give an im-
pression of general excellence in the person who has
obliged us, which may be imaginary. A good man is
still good, though it may not have fallen in his way to
oblige or serve us, nay, though he may have neglected,
or even unintentionally hurt us : and sin is still sin,
though committed by the person in the world to whom
we are the most obliged, and whom we best love.

There is danger also lest our excessive commenda-
tion of our friends, merely as such, may be derived
from vanity as well as gratitude. While we only ap-
pear to be triumphing in the virtues of our friend, we
may be guilty of self-complacency ; the person so ex-
cellent is the person who distinguishes us, and we are
too apt to insert into the general eulogium, the distinc-
tion we ourselves have received from him who is him-
self so much distinguished by others.

With respect to that fatal and most indelicate, mis-

gross maxim, that "a reformed rake makes the best husband;" (an aphorism to which the principles and the happiness of so many young women have been sacrificed.) It goes upon the preposterous supposition, not only that effects do not follow causes, but that they oppose them; on the supposition, that habitual vice creates rectitude of character, and that sin produces happiness: thus flatly contradicting what the moral government of God uniformly exhibits in the course of human events, and what Revelation so evidently and universally teaches.

For it should be observed, that the reformation is generally, if not always supposed to be brought about by the all-conquering force of female charms. Let but a profligate young man have a point to carry by winning the affections of a vain and thoughtless girl; he will begin his attack upon her heart by undermining her religious principles, and artfully removing every impediment which might have obstructed her receiving the addresses of a man without character. And while he will lead her not to hear without ridicule the mention of that change of heart which the Scripture teaches, and experience proves that the power of Divine grace can work on a vicious character; while he will teach her to sneer at a change which he would treat with contempt, because he denies the possibility of so strange and miraculous a conversion; yet he will not scruple to swear that the power of her beauty has worked a revolution in his own loose practices which is equally complete and instantaneous.

But supposing his reformation to be genuine, it would even then by no means involve the truth of her proposition, that past libertinism insures future felicity; yet many a weak girl, confirmed in this palatable doctrine by examples she has frequently admired, of those surprising reformations so conveniently effected in the last scene of most of our comedies, has not scrupled to risque her earthly and eternal happiness with a man, who is not ashamed to ascribe to the influence of her beauty, that power of changing the heart which he impiously denies to Omnipotence itself.

As to the last of these practical aphorisms, that "there is no medium in marriage, but that it is a state

this world a state of raptures, and so naturally by those who know it to be a state of profound discipline. Marriage, therefore, is only one, and often the best condition, of that imperfect being, which, though seldom very exquisite, is very tolerable; and which may yield much to those who do not look for constant transport. Unfortunately, those who find themselves disappointed of the unceasing raptures they had anticipated in marriage, disdain to set down with so poor a consolation as comfort, and scorning the acceptance of that lot which Providence commonly bestows, give themselves up to the other extreme, and, by abandoning their hearts to discontent, to themselves that misery with which their imaginations had filled the opposite scale.

The truth is, these young ladies are very apt to form up their opinions, less from the divines than from the poets; and the poets, though it must be confessed, are some of the best embellishers of life, are not the safest conductors through it. In travelling through a wilderness, though we avail ourselves of the

ls ;" and that "they are endowed with arts of persuasion which supply the absence of force, and the place of reason ;" that they learn, in time to pride themselves on that very weakness, and to become vain of their imperfections ; till at length they begin to ask for their defects, not only pardon, but admiration.

Hence they acquire an habit of cherishing a species of feeling, which if not checked, terminates in selfishness ; they learn to produce their inability to bear contradiction as a proof of their tenderness ; and to indulge in that sort of irritability in all that relates to themselves, which inevitably leads to utter exclusion of all interest in the sufferings of others. Instead of exercising their sensibility in the performance of some duty of relieving distress, and visiting scenes of sorrow, that sensibility itself is pleaded as an excuse for their not being able to endure sights of woe, or shunning the distress it should be exerted in relieving. That exquisite sense of feeling which God has implanted in the heart as a stimulus to quicken us in relieving the miseries of others, is thus introverted, and learns to consider *self* not as the agent, but the object of compassion. Tenderness is made an excuse for being hard-hearted ; and instead of drying the streaming eyes of others, this false delicacy reserves its own and ready tears for the more elegant and less active sorrows of the melting novel, or the pathetic tragedy.

When feeling stimulates only to self-indulgence ; when the more exquisite affections of sympathy and benevolence evaporate in sentiment, instead of flowing out in the charity, and affording assistance, protection, or consolation to every species of distress within its reach ; when an evidence that the feeling is of a spurious kind ; instead of being nourished as an amiable tenderness, it could be subdued as a fond and base self-love.

That idleness, to whose cruel inroads many women of fortune are unhappily exposed, from not having been trained to consider wholesome occupation, vigorous exertion, and systematic employment, as making up for the indispensable duties and pleasures of life, leaves them open to a thousand evils of this kind, from

which the useful and the busy are exempted; and, perhaps, it would not be easy to find a more pitiable object than a woman with a great deal of time and a great deal of money on her hands, who, never having been taught the conscientious use of either, squanders both at random, or rather moulders both away, without plan, without principle, and without pleasure; all whole projects begin and terminate in self; who considers the rest of the world only as they may be subservient to her gratification; and to whom it never occurred, that both her time and money were given for the gratification and good of others.

It is not much to the credit of the other sex, that they now and then lend themselves to the indulgence of this selfish spirit in their wives, and cherish by a kind of false fondness, those faults which should be combated by good sense and a reasonable counteraction: slothfully preferring a little false peace, the purchase of precarious quiet, and the popular reputation of good-nature, to the higher duty of forming the mind, fixing the principles, and strengthening the character of her with whom they are connected. Perhaps too, a little vanity in the husband helps out his good-nature; he secretly rewards himself for his sacrifice by the consciousness of his superiority; he feels a self-complacency in his patient condescension to her weakness, which tacitly flatters his own strength: and he is, as it were paid for stooping, by the increased sense of his own tallness. Seeing also, perhaps, but little of other women, he is taught to believe that they are all pretty much alike, and that as a man of sense, he must content himself with what he takes to be the common lot. Whereas, in truth, by his misplaced indulgence, he has rather *made* his own lot than *drawn* it; and thus, through an indolent despair in the husband of being able to affect any amendment by opposition, and through the want of that sound affection which labours to improve and exalt the character of its object; it happens that many a helpless, fretful, and dandling wife, acquires a more powerful ascendancy than the most discreet and amiable woman; and that the most

the female tyranny is established by these sickly precious humours.

poets again, who, to do them justice, are already to lend an helping hand when any mischief is done, have contributed their full share towards raising these feminine follies : they have strengthened by adulatory maxims, sung in seducing strains, faults which their talents and their influence have been employed in correcting. By fair youthful females, an argument drawn from sound sense and real life, is commonly repelled by a sonnet or a sonnet ; and a couplet is considered as nearly the same validity with a text. When ladies are immented with being.

Fine by defect, and delicately weak !

a standard of feebleness held out to them, to vanity will gladly resort, and to which softness and dolence can easily act up, or rather *act down*, if I be allowed the expression ?

When ladies are told by the same misleading, but too high, authority, that “ smiles and tears are the visible arms with which Nature has furnished weak for conquering the strong,” will they not fly to this cheap and ready artillery, instead of trying to furnish themselves with a reasonable and equable temper, and a meek and quiet spirit ? Every animal is endowed by Providence with the various powers adapted to its nature and its wants ; none, except the human, by grafting art on nature, injures or mars the gift. Spoilt women, fancy there is something more *piquant* and alluring in the mutable graces of caprice, than in the monotony and smoothness of an even temper ; and who also have heard much, as was observed before, about “ amiable weakness,” learn to look about them for the best succedaneum to strength, the supposed absence of which they sometimes endeavour to supply by artifice. By this engine the weakest woman frequently furnishes the converse to the famous reply of the French minister, who, when he was accused of losing the mind of that feeble Queen Mary de Medici by sorcery, replied, “ that the only sorcery he

"had used, was that influence which strong minds naturally have over weak ones."

But though it be fair so to study the tempers, defects, and weaknesses of others, as to convert our knowledge of them to the promotion of their benefit and our own; and though it be making a lawful use of our penetration to avail ourselves of the faults of others for "their good to edification;" yet all deviations from the straight line of truth and simplicity; every plot insidiously to turn influence to unfair account; all contrivances to extort from a bribed complaisance what reason and justice would refuse to our wish; these are some of the operations of that lowest and most despicable engine, selfish cunning, by which *low minds sometimes govern great ones*.

And, unfortunately, women from their natural desire to please, and from their sometimes doubting by what means this grand end may be best effected, are in more danger of being led into dissimulation than men; for dissimulation is the result of weakness; it is the refuge of doubt and distrust, rather than of conscious strength, the dangers of which lie another way. Frankness, truth, and simplicity, therefore, as they are inexpressibly charming, so are they peculiarly commendable in women; and nobly evince that while the possessors of them wish to please, (and why should they not wish it?) they disdain to have recourse to any thing but what is fair, and just, and honourable to effect it; that they scorn to attain the most desired end by any but the most lawful means. The beauty of simplicity is indeed so intimately felt and generally acknowledged by all who have a true taste for personal, moral, or intellectual beauty, that women of the deepest dissimulation often find their account in assuming an exterior the most foreign to their character, and exhibiting the most engaging *naïveté*. It is curious to see how much *art* they put in practice in order to appear *natural*; and the deep *design* which is set at work to display *simplicity*. And indeed this feigned simplicity is the most mischievous, because the most engaging of all the Proteus forms which Artifice can put on. For the most free and bold sentiments have been some-

es hazarded with fatal success under this unsuited mask. And an innocent, quiet, indolent, art-manner, has been adopted as the most refined and successful accompaniment of sentiments, ideas, and desires, neither artless, quiet, nor innocent.

CHAP. XVII.

Dissipation, and the Modern Habits of Fashionable Life.

PERHAPS the interests of true friendship, elegant conversation, mental improvement, social pleasure, maternal duty, and conjugal comfort, never received such blow as when Fashion issued out that arbitrary and universal decree, that *every body must be acquainted with every body*; together with that consequent, authoritative, but rather inconvenient clause, that *every body must go every where every night*. The implicit and devout obedience paid to this law is incompatible with the very being of friendship; for as the circle of acquaintance expands, and it will be continually expanding, affections will be beaten out into such thin laminae to leave little solidity remaining. The heart which continually exhausting itself in professions, grows cold and hard. The feelings of kindness diminish in proportion as the expression of it becomes more diffuse and indiscriminate. The very traces of "simplicity and godly sincerity," in a delicate female, wear away imperceptibly by constant collision with the world at large. And perhaps no woman takes so little interest in the happiness of her real friends, as she whose affections are incessantly evaporating in universal civility; as she who is saying fond and flattering things at random to a circle of five hundred people every night. The decline and fall of animated and instructive conversation has been in a good measure effected by this barbarous project of assembling *en masse*. An excellent prelate,* with whose friendship the author was highly honoured, and who himself excelled in the art of

* The late Bishop Horne.

conversation, used to remark, that a few years had brought about a great revolution in the manners of society; that it used to be the custom, previously to going into company, to think that something was to be communicated or received, taught or learnt; that the powers of the understanding were expected to be brought into exercise, and that it was therefore necessary to quicken the mind, by reading and thinking, for the share the individual might be expected to take in the general discourse; but that now, knowledge, and taste, and wit, and erudition, seemed to be scarcely considered as necessary materials to be brought into the pleasurable commerce of the world; because now there was little chance of turning them to much account; and therefore, he who possessed them, and he who possessed them not, were nearly on a footing.

It is obvious also that multitudinous assemblies are so little favourable to that *cheerfulness* which it should seem to be their very end to promote, that if there were any chymical process by which the quantum of spirits animal or intellectual could be ascertained, the diminution would be found to have been inconceivably great, since the transformation of man and woman from a social to a gregarious animal.

But if it be true, that friendship, society, and *cheerfulness*, have sustained so much injury by this change of manners, how much more pointedly does the remark apply to family happiness.

Notwithstanding the known fluctuation of manners and the mutability of language, could it be foreseen, when the Apostle Paul exhorted "married women to be keepers *at home*," that the time would arrive when that very phrase would be selected to designate one of the most decided acts of dissipation? Could it be foreseen that when a fine lady should send out a notification that on such a night she shall be *AT HOME*, these two significant words (besides intimating the rarity of the thing) would present to the mind an image the most *undomestic* which language can convey? Could it be anticipated that the event of one lady's being *at home* could only be effected by the universal concurrence of all her acquaintance to be abroad? That

imple an act should require such complicated co-
 ordination? And that the report that one person would
 sound in her own house should operate with such an
 electric force as to empty the houses of all her friends?
 My country readers, who may require to have it ex-
 pressed that these two magnetic words *at home*, now
 possess the powerful influence of drawing together
 every thing *fine* within the sphere of their attraction,
 need also to be apprized, that the guests after-
 wards are not asked what was *said* by the company,
 whether the *crowd* was prodigious; the rule for
 judging on the merit of a fashionable society not be-
 coming by the taste or the spirit, but by the *score* and the
trud. The question of pleasure, like a parliamanta-
 question, is now carried by numbers. And when
 parties modish, like two parties political, are run
 against another on the same night, the same kind
 mortification attends the leader of a defeated mi-
 nistry, the same triumph attends the exulting carrier
 of superior numbers, in the one case as in the other.
 The scale of enjoyment is rated by the measure of fa-
 tigue, and the quantity of inconvenience furnishes the
 standard of gratification: the smallness of the dimen-
 sions to which each person is limited on account of the
 altitudes which must divide among them a certain
 space, adds to the sum total of general delight;
 aggregate pleasure is produced by the proportion
 of individual suffering; and not till every guest feels
 himself in the state of a cat in an exhausted receiver,
 as the delighted hostess attain the consummation of
 that renown which is derived from such overflowing
 numbers as shall throw all her competitors at a disgrace-
 ful distance.

An eminent divine has said, that either "persever-
 nce in prayer will make a man leave off sinning, or
 continuance in sin will make him leave off prayer."
 This remark may be accommodated to those ladies
 who, while they are devoted to the enjoyments of the
 world, yet retain considerable solicitude for the instruc-
 tion of their daughters. But if they are really in ear-
 nest to give them a Christian education, they must
 themselves renounce a dissipated life. Or if they re-

solve to pursue the chase of pleasure, they must renounce this prime duty. Contraries cannot unite. The moral nurture of a tall daughter can no more be administered by a mother whose time is absorbed by crowds abroad, than the physical nurture of her infant offspring can be supplied by her in a perpetual absence from home. And is not that a preposterous affection, which, after leading a mother to devote a few months to the inferior duty of furnishing aliment to the mere animal life, allows her to desert her post when the more important moral and intellectual cravings require sustenance? This great object is not to be effected with the shreds and parings rounded off from the circle of a dissipated life; but in order to its adequate execution, the mother should carry it on with the same spirit and perseverance at home, which the father thinks it necessary to be exerting abroad in his public duty or professional engagements.

The usual vindication (and in theory it has a plausible sound) which has been offered for the large portion of time spent by women in acquiring ornamental talents is, that they are calculated to make the possessor love home, and that they innocently fill up the hours of leisure. The plea has indeed so promising an appearance, that it is worth inquiring whether it be in fact true. Do we then, on fairly pursuing the inquiry, discover that those who have spent most time in such light acquisitions, are really remarkable for loving home or staying quietly there? or that when there, they are sedulous in turning time to the best account? I speak not of that rational and respectable class of women, who, applying (as many of them do) these elegant talents to their true purpose, employ them to fill up the vacancies of better occupations, and to embellish the leisure of a life actually good. But do we *generally* see that even the most valuable and sober part of the reigning female acquisitions leads their possessor to scenes most favourable to the enjoyment of them? to scenes which we should naturally suppose she would seek, in order to the more effectual cultivation of such rational pleasures? To learn to endure, to enjoy, and to adorn solitude, seems to be one great end for bestowing ac-

ishments, instead of making them the motive for trying those who have acquired them into crouds, in for their most effectual display.

Would not those delightful pursuits, Botany and wing, for instance, seem likely to court the fields, woods, and gardens of the paternal seat, as more genial to their nature; and more appropriate to exercise, than barren watering places, destitute of tree, or an herb, or a flower, and not affording an interval from successive pleasures, to profit by the scene, even if it abounded with the whole vegetable world, from the "Cedar of Lebanon to the Hyssop on the wall."

From the mention of watering places, may the author be allowed to suggest a few remarks on the evils which have arisen from the general conspiracy of the rich to usurp the regions of the sick; and from their diverting the health-restoring fountains, meant as a refuge for disease, into the resorts of vanity for those who have no disease but idleness?

This inability of staying at home, as it is one of the most infallible, so it is one of the most dangerous symptoms of the reigning mania. It would be more tolerable, did this epidemic malady only break out, as formerly, during the winter, or some one season. Herefore, the tenantry and the poor, the natural dependents on the rural mansions of the opulent, had some indefinite period to which they might joyfully look forward for the approach of those patrons, part of whose business in life it is to influence by their presence, to instruct by their example, to soothe by their kindness, and to assist by their liberality, those whom Providence in the distribution of human lots, has placed under their more immediate protection. Though it would be far from truth to assert, that dissipated people are ever charitable, yet I will venture to say, that dissipation is inconsistent with the *spirit* of charity. That affecting precept followed by so gracious a promise "Never turn away thy face from any poor man, and when the face of the Lord shall never be turned away from thee," cannot literally mean that we should be open to all, as then we should soon have nothing left to

give : but it seems to intimate the habitual attention, the duty of inquiring out all cases of distress, in order to judge which are fit to be relieved ; now for this inquiry, for this attention, for this sympathy, the dissipated have little taste, and less leisure.

Let a reasonable conjecture (for calculation would fail !) be made of how large a diminution of the general good has been effected in this single respect, by causes which, though they do not seem important in themselves, yet make no inconsiderable part of the mischief arising from modern manners : and I speak now to persons who *intend* to be charitable : what a deduction will be made from the aggregate of charity, by a circumstance apparently trifling, when we consider what would be the beneficial effects of that regular bounty which must almost unavoidably result from the evening walks of a great and benevolent family among the cottages of their own domain : the thousand little acts of, comparatively, unexpensive kindness, which the sight of petty wants and difficulties would excite ; wants, which will scarcely be felt in the relation ; and which will probably be neither seen, nor felt, nor fairly represented, in their long absences, by an agent. And what is even almost more than the good done, is the habit of mind kept up in those who do it. Would not this habit, exercised on the Christian principle, that “even a cup of cold water,” given upon *right motives*, shall not lose its reward ; while the giving “all their goods to feed the poor,” without the true *principle* of charity, shall profit them nothing ; would not this habit, I say, and the inculcation of the spirit which produces it, be almost the best part of the education of daughters ? *

* It would be a pleasant summer amusement for our young ladies of fortune, if they were to preside at such spinning faults as are instituted at Nuneham for the promotion of virtue and industry in their own sex. Pleasurable anniversaries of this kind would serve to cement in the minds of the poor two ideas which ought never to be separated, but which *they* are not very forward to unite—that the great, wish to make them *happy* as well as good. Occasional approximations of the rich and poor, for the purposes of relief and instruction, and annual meetings for the purpose of innocent pleasure, would go much towards wearing away discontent ; and the conviction that the rich really take an interest in their comfort, would contribute to reconcile the lower classes to that state in which it has pleased God to place them.

Transplant this wealthy and bountiful family periodically, to the frivolous and uninteresting bustle of the watering place ; there it is not denied that frequent public and fashionable acts of charity may make a part (and it is well they do) of the business and amusement of the day ; with this latter, indeed, they are sometimes good-naturedly mixed up. But how shall we compare the regular systematical good these persons could be doing at their own home, with the light, and trifling, and bustling bounties of the public place ? The illegal raffle at the toy-shop, may relieve, it is true, some distress ; but this distress, though it may be real, and if real it ought to be relieved, is far less easily ascertained than the wants of the poor round a person's own neighbourhood, or the debts of a distressed tenant. How shall we compare the broad stream of bounty which should be flowing through, and refreshing whole districts, with the penurious current of the subscription breakfast for the needy musician, in which the price of the gift is taken out in the diversion, and in which pleasure dignifies itself with the name of bounty ? How shall we compare the attention, time, and zeal, which would otherwise, perhaps, be devoted to the village-school, spent in hawking about benefit tickets for a broken player, while the kindness of the benefactress, & perhaps, rewarded by scenes in which her charity is not always repaid by the purity of the exhibition ?

Far be it from the author to wish to check the full tide of charity wherever it is disposed to flow ! Would he could multiply the already abundant streams, and behold every source purified ! But in the public resorts there are many who are able and willing to give.

In the sequestered though populous village, there is, perhaps, only one affluent family : the distress which they do not *behold*, will probably not be attended to : the distress which *they* do not relieve, will probably not be relieved at all : the wrongs which *they* do not redress, will go unredressed : the oppressed whom *they* do not rescue, will sink under the tyranny of the oppressor. Through their own rural domains too, charity runs in a clearer current, and is under less suspicion of being polluted by that muddy tincture which it is sometimes

apt to contract in passing through the impure soil of the world.

But to return from this too long digression. The old standing objection formerly brought forward by the prejudices of the other sex, and too eagerly held on as a shelter for indolence and ignorance of ours, was, that intellectual accomplishments too much absorbed the thoughts and affections, took women off from the necessary attention to domestic duties, and superinduced a contempt or neglect of whatever was useful. It is peculiarly the character of the present day to detect absurd opinions, and expose plausible theories by the simple and decisive answer of experiment; and it is presumed that this popular error, as well as others, is daily receiving the refutation of actual experience. For it cannot surely be maintained on ground that is any longer tenable, that acquirements truly rational are calculated to draw off the mind from real duties. Whatever removes prejudices, whatever stimulates industry, whatever rectifies the judgment, whatever corrects self-conceit, whatever purifies the taste, and raises the understanding, will be likely to contribute to moral excellence: to woman moral excellence is the grand object of education; and of moral excellence, domestic life is to woman the proper sphere.

Count over the list of females who have made shipwreck of their fame and virtue, and have furnished the most lamentable examples of the dereliction of family duties; and the number will not be found considerable who have been led astray by the pursuit of knowledge. And if a few deplorable instances of this kind be produced, it will commonly be found that there was little infusion in the minds of such women of that correcting principle without which all other knowledge only "puffeth up."

The time nightly expended in late female vigils is expended by the light of far other lamps than those which are fed by the student's oil; and if families are to be found who are neglected through too much study in the mistress, it will probably be proved to be Hoyle, and not Homer, who has robbed her children of her time and affections. For one family which has

neglected by the mother's passion for books, and have been defeated through her passion for

The husband of a fashionable woman will not find that the library is the apartment the excesses of which involve him in debt or disgrace. And the literary flatterer, who now manifests her indifference to her husband by the neglect of her person, are scores of elegant spendthrifts who ruin their excesses of decoration.

May I digress a little, while I remark, that I am far from asserting that literature has never filled women with vanity and self-conceit; the contrary is too obvious, and it happens in this as in other cases, that a few characters conspicuously absurd, have served to bring an whole order into ridicule. But I will assert, in general those whom books are supposed to have educated, would have been spoiled in another way without them. She who is a vain pedant because she has read much, has probably that defect in her mind which would have made her a vain fool if she had read nothing.

It is not her having more knowledge, but less common sense, which makes her insufferable: and ignorance would have added little to her value, for it is not what she has, but what she wants, which makes her unattractive. The truth, however, probably lies here, while her understanding was improved, the temper of her heart were neglected, and that in cultivating the fame of a *savante*, she lost the humility of a Christian. But these instances too, furnish only a fresh argument for the *general* cultivation of the female mind.

A wider diffusion of sound knowledge, would remove that temptation to be vain which may be excited by its rarity.

From the union of an unfurnished mind and a cold temper, there results a kind of necessity for dissipation.

The very term gives an idea of mental imbecility. Idleness, which a working and fatigued mind requires, is a relaxation; it requires something to unbend itself, to lessen its efforts, to relieve it from its exertions; and amusement is the *business* of feeble minds, and is pursued on with a length and seriousness incompatible with the refreshing idea of relaxation. There is

scarcely any one thing which comes under the description of public amusement, which does not fill the space of three or four hours nightly. Is not that a large proportion of refreshment for a mind, which, generally speaking, has hardly been kept so many hours together on the stretch in the morning, by business, by study, by devotion ?

But while we would assert that a woman of a cultivated intellect is not driven by the same necessity as others, into the giddy whirl of public resort ; who but regrets that real cultivation does not *invariably* preserve her from it ? No wonder that inanity of character, that vacuity of mind, that torpid ignorance, should plunge into dissipation as their natural refuge ; should seek to bury their insignificance in the crowd of pressing multitudes, and hope to escape analysis and detection in the undistinguished masses of mixed assemblies ! *There* attrition rubs all bodies smooth, and makes all surfaces alike ; thither superficial and external accomplishments naturally fly as to their proper scene of action ; as to a field where competition in *such* perfections is in perpetual exercise ; where the laurels of admiration are to be won ; whence the trophies of vanity may be carried off triumphantly.

It would indeed be matter of little comparative regret, if this corrupt air were breathed only by those whose natural element it seems to be ; but who can forbear lamenting that the power of fashion attracts into this impure and unwholesome atmosphere, minds also of a better make, of higher aims and ends, of more ethereal temper ? that it attracts even those who, renouncing enjoyments for which they have a genuine taste, and which would make them really happy, neglect society they love, and pursuits they admire, in order that they may *seem* happy, and *be* fashionable in the chase of pleasures they despise, and in company they disapprove ! But no correctness of taste, no depth of knowledge, will infallibly preserve a woman from this contagion, unless her heart be impressed with a deep Christian conviction that she is accountable for the application of knowledge, as well as for the dedication of time. Perhaps if there be any one principle which

The pair, not *matched, but joined*, set out separately with their independent and individual pursuits. Whether it made a part of their original plan or not, that they should be indispensably necessary to each other's comfort, the sense of this necessity, probably not very strong at first, rather diminishes, than increases by time; they live so much in the world, and so little together, that to stand well with their *own set* continues the favourite project of each; while to stand well with each other is considered as an under part of the lot in the drama of life. Whereas, did they start in the conjugal race with the fixed idea that they were to look to each other for their chief worldly happiness, not only principle, but prudence, and even selfishness, would convince them of the necessity of industriously cultivating each other's esteem and affection as the grand means of promoting that happiness. But vanity, and the desire of flattery and applause, still continue to operate. Even after the husband is brought to feel a perfect indifference for his wife, he still likes to see her decorated in a style which may serve to justify his choice. He encourages her to set off her person, not so much for his own gratification, as that his self-love may be flattered, by her continuing to attract the admiration of those whose opinion is the standard by which he measures his fame, and which fame is to stand in the stead of happiness. Thus is she necessarily exposed to the two-fold temptation of being at once neglected by her husband, and exhibited as an object of attraction to other men. If she escape this complicated danger, she will be indebted for her preservation not to his prudence, but to her own principles.

In some of these modish marriages, instead of the decorous neatness, the pleasant intercourse, and the mutual warmth of communication of the once social dinner; the late and uninteresting meal is commonly hurried over by the languid and slovenly pair, that the one may have time to dress for his club, and the other for her party. And in these cold abstracted *têtes-à-têtes* they often take as little pains to entertain each other, as if the one was precisely the only human being in the world in whose eyes the other did not feel it necessary to appear agreeable.

how to produce on occasions not *quite* they would, I am persuaded, often find to be very agreeable people. And both lighted and delighting, receiving and being, would no longer be driven to the perpetually escaping from home as from which offers no possible materials for permanent steady and growing attachment, improved confidence and mutual interchange of judgment ripening and experience strengthening esteem which taste and inclination first in party studying to promote the eternal as well as the temporal happiness of the other; each correcting the errors, improving the principles, and confirming the faith of the beloved object; thus would the feeling heart with gratifications which the world has not to bestow; such an heart would spare its interesting domestic scenes with the pleasures of public resort, till it would leave home, not from necessity, but taste; not from duty, but choice; not from duty, but delight.

It may seem a contradiction to have beings of all ages, tempers, and talents

pleasure of the engagement itself, which is the object. There is an agitation in the arrangements which imposes itself on the vacant heart for happiness. There is a tumult kept up in the spirits which is a busy though treacherous substitute for comfort. The multiplicity of solicitations soothes vanity. The very reason that they cannot be all accepted, has its charms; dignity is flattered because refusal implies importance, and pre-engagement intimates celebrity. Then there is the joy of being invited when others are neglected; the triumph of shewing our less modish friend that we are going where she cannot come; and the mingled regret at being *obliged* to go, assumed before we are half wild at being obliged to stay away. There is the secret art of exciting envy in the very act of speaking compassion; and of challenging respect by representing their engagements as duties, oppressive indeed, but indispensable. These are some of the supernatural shifts for happiness with which vanity condescends to feed her hungry followers, too eager to be deceived.*

In the succession of open houses, in which pleasure is to be started and pursued on any given night, the real place is never taken into the account of enjoyment: the scene of which is always supposed to lie in a place where her votaries happen not to be. Pleasure has no present tense: but in the house which her suitors have just quitted, and in the house to which they are just hastening, a stranger might conclude the very goddess had really fixed her throne, and that worshippers considered the existing scene, which they seem compelled to suffer, but from which they are eager to escape, as really detaining them from some future joy to which they are flying in the next crowd; if he met them there, he would find the component parts of each precisely the same. He would

The precaution which is taken against the possibility of being engaged by the long interval between the invitation and the period of accomplishment, reminds us of what historians remark of the sons of ancient Crotona, who used to send their invitations a year before the time, that the guests might prepare both their dress and their wit for the visit.

hear the same stated phrases interrupted, not answered, by the same stated replies, the unfinished sentence "driven adverse to the winds," by pressing multitudes; the same warm regret mutually exchanged by two *friends* (who had been expressly denied to each other all the winter) that they had not met before; the same soft and smiling sorrow at being *separated* from each other now; the same avowed anxiety to renew the meeting with perhaps the same secret resolution to avoid it. He would hear described with the same pathetic earnestness the difficulties of getting into this house, and the dangers of getting out of the last! the perilous retreat of former nights, effected amidst the shock of chariots, and the clang of contending coachmen! a retreat indeed effected with a skill and peril little inferior to that of the *ten thousand*, and detailed with far juster triumph: for that which happened only once in a life to the Grecian hero, occurs to these British heroines every night. There is one point of resemblance, indeed, between them, in which the comparison fails; for the commander with a *mauvaise honte* at which a true female veteran would blush, is remarkable for never *naming himself*.

With "mysterious reverence" I forbear to descant on those serious and interesting rites, for the more august and solemn celebration of which, Fashion nightly convenes these splendid myriads to her more sumptuous temples. Rites! which, when engaged in with due devotion, absorb the whole soul, and call every passion into exercise, except indeed those of love, and peace, and kindness, and gentleness. Inspiring rites! which stimulate fear, rouse hope, kindle zeal, quicken dullness, sharpen discernment, exercise memory, inflame curiosity! Rites, in short, in the due performance of which all the energies and attentions, all the powers and abilities, all the abstraction and exertion, all the diligence and devotedness, all the sacrifice of time, all the contempt of ease, all the neglect of sleep, all the oblivion of care, all the risks of fortune (half of which, if directed to their true objects would change the very face of the world :) all these are concentrated to one point; a point in which the wise and the weak,

the learned and the ignorant, the fair and the fright-
 l, the sprightly and the dull, the rich and the poor,
 the patrician and Plebian, meet in one common and
 uniform equality ; an equality as religiously respected
 these solemnities, in which all distinctions are lev-
 elled at a blow, (and of which the very spirit is there-
 fore democratical,) as it is combated in all other in-
 stances.

Behold four Kings in majesty revered,
 With hoary whiskers and a forked beard ;
 And four fair Queens, whose hands sustain a flower,
 Th' expressive emblem of their softer power ;
 Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
 Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand ;
 And party coloured troops, a shining train,
 Drawn forth to combat on the velvet plain. *

CHAP. XVIII.

Public Amusements.

IT is not proposed to enter the long contested field of
 controversy as to the individual amusements which
 may be considered as safe and lawful for those women
 of the higher class who make a strict profession of
 christianity. The judgment they will be likely to
 form for themselves on the subject, and the plan they
 will consequently adopt, will depend much on the
 earnestness or obscurity of their religious views, and on
 the greater or less progress they have made in their
 christian course. It is in their choice of amusements
 that you are able, in some measure, to get acquainted
 with the real dispositions of mankind. In their *busi-
 ness*, in the leading employments of life, their path is
 in a good degree chalked out for them : there is in
 it respect a sort of general character, wherein the
 greater part, more or less, must coincide. But in their
amusements the choice is voluntary, the taste is self-direct-
 ed, the propensity is independent ; and of course the
 habitual state, the genuine bent and bias of the tem-
 per, are most likely to be seen in those pursuits which
 every person is at liberty to choose for himself.

When a truly religious principle shall have acquired such a degree of force as to produce that conscientious and habitual improvement of time before recommended, it will discover itself by an increasing indifferent and even deadness to those pleasures which are interesting to the world at large. A woman under the predominating influence of such a principle, will begin to discover that the same thing which in itself is innocent, may yet be comparatively wrong. She will begin to feel that there are many amusements and employments which, though they have nothing censurable in themselves, yet if they be allowed to inrench on hours which ought to be dedicated to still better purposes; or if they are protracted to an undue length; or above all, if by softening and relaxing her mind and dissipating her spirits, they so indispose her for better pursuits as to render subsequent duties a burden, they become in that case clearly wrong for her, whatever they may be for others. Now as temptations of this sort are the peculiar dangers of better kind of characters, the sacrifice of such little gratifications as may be *no great harm in them*, come in among the daily calls to self-denial in a Christian.

The fine arts, for instance, polite literature, elegant society, these are among the lawful, and liberal, and becoming recreations of higher life; yet if even these be cultivated to the neglect or exclusion of severer duties; if they interfere with serious studies, or disqualify the mind for religious exercises, it is an intimation that they have been too much indulged; and, under such circumstances, it might be the part of Christian circumspection to inquire if the time devoted to them ought not to be abridged. Above all, a tender conscience will never lose sight of one safe rule of determining in all doubtful cases: if the point be so nice that though we hope upon the whole there *may* be no harm in engaging it, we may at least be always quite sure that there *can* be no harm in letting it alone. The adoption of this simple rule would put a period to much unprofitable casuistry.

The principle of being responsible for the use of time, if once fixed in the mind, the conscientious Chris-

will be making a continual progress in the great turning time to account. In the first stages of religion she will have abstained from pleasures which began a *little* to wound the conscience, or which had a questionable shape; but she will probably have abstained with regret, and with a secret wish that Providence *could* have permitted her to keep well with pleasure and religion too. But you may discern in the subsequent course that she has reached a more advanced stage, by her beginning to neglect even such pleasures or employments as have no moral turpitude in them, but are merely what are called innocent.

Her relinquishment arises, not so much from her being still more the restraints of religion, as from her improvement in her religious taste. Pleasures do not now attach her merely from their being innocent, unless they are likewise interesting, and to be enjoying they must be consonant to her superinducements. She is not contented to spend a large portion of her time harmlessly, it must be spent profitably also. Nay, if she be indeed earnestly "pressing towards the mark," it will not be even enough for her that her present pursuit be good if she be convinced it might be still better. Her contempt of ordinary enjoyments will increase in a direct proportion to her increased relish for those pleasures which religion commands and bestows. So that at length if it were possible to suppose that an angel could come down to take her as it were the interdict, and to invite her to resume the pleasures she had renounced, and to resume them with complete impunity, she would reject the invitation, because, from an improvement in her spiritual taste, she would despise those delights from which she first abstained through fear. Till her will and affections come heartily to be engaged in the service of God, the progress will not be comfortable; but once they are so engaged, the attachment to this service will be cordial, and her heart will not desire to sick and toil again in the drudgery of the world. Her religion has not so much given her a new creed, a new heart, and a new life.

Her views are become new, so her tempers, dis-

produce one of these two effects; she
proper seasons present themselves, struggle
to produce such subjects as may be useful to
supposing that she finds herself unable to do
will, as far as she prudently can, absent
all unprofitable kind of society. Indeed
of conducting herself under these circum-
stances serve to furnish her with a test of her
For while people are contending for a
this amusement, and pleading for a little
that gratification, and fighting, in order to
hedge in a little more territory in their plea-
they are exhibiting a kind of evidence
selves, that they are not yet "renewed in
their mind."

It has been warmly urged as an object
religious books, and particularly against
of high worth and celebrity, by a distin-
guished man,* that they have set the standard
higher than reason or even than Christian
These works do indeed elevate the genera-
tion to a higher pitch than is quite
those who are at infinite pains to construct

however, is so far reasonable, as only to beg quarter for her own favourite diversion, and generously abandons the defence of those in which she herself has no particular pleasure.

But these objectors do not seem to understand the true genius of Christianity. They do not consider that it is the character of the Gospel to exhibit a scheme of principles, of which it is the tendency to infuse such a spirit of holiness as must be utterly incompatible, not only with customs decidedly vicious, but with the very spirit of worldly pleasure. They do not consider that Christianity is neither a table of ethics, nor a system of opinions, nor a bundle of rods to punish, nor an exhibition of rewards to allure, nor a scheme of restraints to terrify, nor merely a code of laws to restrict ; but it is a new principle infused into the heart by the word and the spirit of God ; out of which principle will inevitably grow right opinions, renewed affections, correct morals, pure desires, heavenly tempers, and holy habits, with an invariable desire of pleasing God, and a constant fear of offending him. A real Christian, whose heart is once thoroughly imbued with this principle, can no more return to the amusements of the world, than a philosopher can be refreshed with the diversions of the vulgar, or a man be amused with the recreations of a child. The New-Testament is not a mere statute-book : it is not a table where every offence is detailed, and its corresponding penalty annexed : it is not so much a *compilation*, as a *spirit* of laws : it does not so much prohibit every individual wrong practice, as suggest a temper and implant a general principle with which every wrong practice is incompatible. It did not, for instance, so much attack the then reigning and corrupt fashions, which were probably, like the fashions of other countries, temporary and local, as it struck at that worldliness, which is the root and stock from which all corrupt fashions proceed.

The prophet Isaiah, who addressed himself more particularly to the Israelitish women, inveighed not only against vanity, luxury, and immodesty, in general ; but with great propriety censured even those precise instances of each, to which the women of rank in

the particular country he was addressing, were especially addicted; nay, he enters into the minute details of their very personal decorations, and brings specific charges against several instances of their levity and extravagance of apparel; meaning, however, chiefly to censure the turn of character which these indicated. But the Gospel of Christ, which was to be addressed to all ages, stations, and countries, seldom contains any such detailed animadversions; for though many of the censurable modes which the prophet so severely reprobated, continued probably to be still prevalent in Jerusalem in the days of our Saviour, yet how little would it have suited the universality of his mission, to have confined his preaching to such local, limited, and fluctuating customs! not but that there are many texts which actually do define the Christian conduct as well as temper, with sufficient particularity to serve as a condemnation of many practices which are pleaded for, and often to point pretty directly at them.

It would be well for those modish Christians who vindicate excessive vanity in dress, expence, and decoration, on the principle of their being matters of indifference, and no where prohibited in the Gospel, to consider that such practices strongly mark the temper and spirit with which they are connected, and in that view are so little creditable to the Christian profession, as to furnish a just subject of suspicion against the piety of those who indulge in them.

Had Peter, on that memorable day when he added three thousand converts to the Church by a single sermon, narrowed his subject to a remonstrance against this diversion, or that public place, or the other vain amusement, it might indeed have suited the case of some of the female Jewish converts who were present; but such restrictions as might have been appropriate to *them* would probably not have applied to the cases of the Parthians and Medes, of which his audience was partly composed; or such as might have belonged to them would have been totally inapplicable to the Cretes and Arabians; or again, those which suited these would not have applied to the Elamites and Mesopotamians.

ch partial and circumscribed addressees, his multi-
 tudinous audience, composed of all nations and coun-
 tries, would not have been, as we are told they were,
 "struck to the heart." But when he preached on
 the broad ground of general "repentance and remis-
 sion of sins in the name of Jesus Christ," it was no
 wonder that they all cried out, "What shall we do?"
 The collected foreigners, at their return home, must
 have found very different usages to be corrected in their
 respective countries; of course a detailed restriction of
 popular abuses at Jerusalem, would have been of
 little use to strangers returning to their respective na-
 tions.

The ardent Apostle, therefore, acted more con-
 sistently in communicating to them the large and com-
 prehensive spirit of the Gospel, which should at once
 embrace all their scattered and separate duties, as well
 as prove all their scattered and separate corruptions:
 the whole always includes a part, and the greater
 covers the less. Christ and his disciples, instead of
 limiting their condemnation to the peculiar vanities
 denounced by Isaiah, embraced the very soul and
 principle of them all, in such exhortations as the fol-
 lowing: "Be ye not conformed to the world:"—"If
 any man love the world, the love of the Father is
 not in him:"—"The fashion of this world passeth
 away." Our Lord and his Apostles, whose future
 collected audience was to be made up out of the va-
 rious inhabitants of the whole world, attacked the evil
 root out of which all those incidental, local, peculiar,
 popular corruptions proceeded.

At the time of Christ and his immediate followers,
 luxury and intemperance of the Romans had risen
 to a pitch before unknown in the world; but as the
 Gospel which its Divine Author and his disciples
 were then preaching to the hungry and necessitous, was
 afterwards to be preached to the high and low, not ex-
 cepting the Roman emperors themselves; the large
 precept, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye
 do, do all to the glory of God," was likely to be of
 general use, than any separate exhortation to tem-
 perance, to thankfulness, to moderation as to quantity
 of food; which last indeed must always be left in

Nero. He must have reflected with peccation on many things which were practised in the games: yet, instead of pruning the tree, and singling out even the inhuman sports for the object of his condemnation, he cut at the root of all corruption, by preaching that Gospel of Christ of which "he was zealous, and shewing to them that believed, that the power of God, and the wisdom of God, in that Gospel the great object was, to attack not the evil, but the whole body of sin. Now the Christ crucified was the most appropriate remedy for destroying this; for by what other means could the fervid imagination of the Apostle have enforced the heinousness of sin, as by the costliness of the sacrifice which was offered for its redemption? It is somewhat remarkable, that at the very time of his preaching to the Romans, the taste had sunk to such an excess of depravity, that many women engaged in those shocking combats with the gladiators.

But, in the first place, it was better that the practice of his hearers should grow out

lar diversions, might have seemed to sanction all they did not actually censure : and as, in the course of time, and the revolution of governments, customs, change, and manners fluctuate ; had a minute censure of the fashions of the then existing age published in the New-Testament, that portion of it would have must in time have become obsolete, even in the very same country, when the fashions themselves had changed. Paul and his brother Apostles knew that their epistles would be the oracles of the Christian world, when these temporary diversions should be forgotten. In consequence of this knowledge, by the universal precept to avoid "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," they have prepared a lasting antidote against the principal corrupt pleasures, which will ever remain equally applicable to the loose fashions of all ages, and every country, to the end of the world.

Therefore, to vindicate diversions which are in themselves unchristian, on the pretended ground that they are not specifically condemned in the Gospel, would be still less absurd than if the heroes of Newmarket should bring it as a proof that their periodical meetings are not condemned in Scripture, because St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, did not speak against gaming diversions ; and that in availing himself of the Christian games, as a happy illustration of the Christian race, he did not drop any censure on the practice : a practice which was indeed as much more innocent than the races of Christian Britain, as the mode of being contented with the triumph of a crown, is superior to that criminal spirit of gambling which iniquitously enriches the victor by beggaring his competitor.

Such moral abuses, as we have said, were not the object of the book whose instructions were to be of universal and lasting application. As a proof of this, little is said in the Gospel of the then prevailing corruption of gaming ; nothing against the savage custom of exposing children, or even against slavery ; nothing expressly against suicide or duelling ; the last Gothic custom, indeed, did not exist among the crimes of

Paganism. But is there not an implied prohibition against polygamy in the general denunciation against adultery? Is not exposing of children condemned in that charge against the Romans, that "they were without natural affection?" Is there not a strong censure against slavery, conveyed in the command "do unto others as you would have them do unto you?" against suicide and duelling, in the general prohibition against murder, which is strongly enforced and affectingly amplified by the solemn manner in which murder is traced back to its first seed of anger, in the sermon on the mount?

Thus it is clear, that when Christ sent the Gospel to all nations, he meant that this Gospel should proclaim those prime truths, general laws, and fundamental doctrines, which must necessarily involve the prohibition of all individual, local, and inferior errors; errors which could not have been specifically guarded against, without having a distinct Gospel for every country, or without swelling the divine volume into such inconvenient length as would have defeated one great end of its promulgation.* And while its leading principles are of universal application, it must always, in some measure, be left to the discretion of the preacher, and to the conscience of the hearer, to examine whether the life and habits of those who profess it are conformable to its main spirit and design.

The same Divine Spirit which indited the Holy Scriptures, is promised to purify the hearts and renew the natures of repenting and believing Christians; and the compositions it inspired are in some degree analogous to the workmanship it effects. It prohibited the vicious practices of the apostolical days, by prohibiting the passions and principles which rendered them gratifying; and still working in like manner on the hearts of real Christians, it corrects the taste, which was accustomed to find its proper gratification in the resorts of vanity; and thus effectually provides for the reformation of the habits, and infuses a relish for rational and domestic enjoyments, and for whatever can administer pleasure to that spirit of peace, and love, and

* "To the poor the Gospel is preached," Luke vii. 12.

, and joy, which animates and rules the renewed
of the true Christian.

At there is a portion of Scripture which, though to
erficial reader it may seem but very remotely con-
d with the present subject, yet to readers of
er cast, seems to settle the matter beyond con-
rfsy. In the parable of the great supper, this im-
ant truth is held out to us, that even things *good in*
themselves may be the means of our eternal ruin, by
ing our hearts from God, and causing us to make
of the offers of the Gospel. One invited guest
bought an estate, another had made a purchase,
lly blameless, of oxen; a third had married a wife,
t not illaudable in itself. They had all different
ns, none of which appeared to have an *moral*
itude; but they all agreed in this, *to decline the in-*
tion to the supper. The worldly possessions of one,
worldly business of another, and what should be
icularly attended to, the love to his dearest relative,
third, (a love, by the way, not only allowed but
manded in Scripture,) were brought forward as
ses for not attending to the important business of
ion. The consequence, however, was the same to

“None of those which were bidden, shall taste of
y supper.” If then things *innocent*, things *necessary*,
gs *laudable*, things *commanded*, become sinful, when
inseasonable or excessive indulgence they detain
heart and affections from God, how vain will all
e arguments necessarily be rendered, which are
ed by the advocates for certain amusements, on the
ind of their *harmlessness*; if those amusements serve
to mention any positive evil which may belong to
n) in like manner to draw away the thoughts and
ctions from all spiritual objects!

To conclude; when this topic happens to become
subject of conversation, instead of addressing severe
pointed attacks to young ladies on the sin of at-
ting places of diversion, would it not be better first
ndeavour to excite in them that principle of Chris-
ity, with which such diversions seem not quite com-
ple; as the physician who visits a patient in an erup-
fever, pays little attention to those spots which to

the ignorant appear to be the disease, except indeed so far as they serve as indications to let him into its nature, but goes straight to the root of the malady? He attacks the fever, he lowers the pulse, he changes the system, he corrects the general habit; well knowing that if he can but restore the vital principle of health, the spots, which were nothing but symptoms, will die away of themselves.

In instructing others, we should imitate our Lord and his Apostles, and not always aim our blow at each particular corruption; but making it our business to convince our pupil that what brings forth the evil fruit she exhibits, cannot be a branch of the true vine; we should thus avail ourselves of individual corruptions, for impressing her with a sense of the necessity of purifying the common source from which they flow—corrupt nature. Thus making it our grand business to rectify the heart, we pursue the true, the compendious, the only method of producing universal holiness.

I would, however, take leave of those amiable and not ill-disposed young persons, who complain of the rigour of human prohibitions, and declare, “they meet with no such strictness in the Gospel,” by assuring them, with the most affectionate earnestness, if they can conscientiously reconcile their nightly attendance at every public place which they frequent, with such precepts as the following: “Redeeming the time:”—“Watch and pray:”—“Watch, for ye know not at what time your Lord cometh:”—“Abstain from all appearance of evil:”—“Set your affections on things above:”—“Be ye spiritually minded:”—“Crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts?” And I would venture to offer one criterion, by which the persons in question may be enabled to decide on the positive innocence and safety of such diversions; I mean, provided they are sincere in their scrutiny, and honest in their avowal. If, on their return at night from those places, they find they can retire, and “commune with their own hearts;” if they find the love of God operating with undiminished force on their minds; if they can “bring every thought into subjection,” and concentrate every

wandering imagination ; if they can soberly examine into their own state of mind :—I do not say if they can do all this perfectly and without distraction ; (for who almost can do this at any time ?) but if they can do it with the same *degree* of seriousness, pray with the same *degree* of fervour, and renounce the world in as great a *measure* as at other times ; and if they can lie down with a peaceful consciousness of having avoided in the evening, “that temptation” which they had prayed not to be “led into” in the morning, they may then more reasonably hope that all is well, and that they are not speaking false peace to their hearts.—Again, if we cannot beg the blessing of our Maker on whatever we are going to do or to enjoy, is it not an unequivocal proof that the thing ought not to be done or enjoyed ? On all the rational enjoyments of society, on all healthful and temperate exercise, on the delights of friendship, arts, and polished letters, on the exquisite pleasures resulting from the enjoyment of rural scenery, and the beauties of nature ; on the innocent participation of these, we may ask the divine favour—for the sober enjoyment of those we may thank the divine beneficence : but do we feel equally disposed to invoke blessings, or return praises, for gratifications found, (to say no worse,) in levity, in vanity, and waste of time ?—If these tests were fairly used ; if these experiments were honestly tried ; if these examinations were conscientiously made, may we not, without offence, presume to ask—*Could* our numerous places of public resort, *could* our ever-multiplying scenes of more select but not less dangerous diversion, nightly overflow with an excess hitherto unparalleled in the annals of pleasure ? *

* If I might presume to recommend a book which of all others exposes the insignificance, vanity, littleness, and emptiness of the world, I should not hesitate to name Mr. Law's “*Serious-Call to a devout and holy Life.*” Few writers, except Pascal, have directed so much acuteness of reasoning, and so much pointed wit to this object. He not only makes the reader afraid of a worldly life on account of its sinfulness, but ashamed of it on account of its folly. Few men perhaps have had a deeper insight into the human heart, or have more skillfully probed its corruptions : yet on points of doctrine his views do not seem to be just ; and his disquisitions are often unsound and fanciful, so that a general perusal of his works would neither be profitable or intelligible. To a fashionable woman immersed in the vanities of life, or to a busy man overwhelmed with its cares, I know no book so applicable, or likely

the strictness of religion as we are freed from beings who are voluntarily pursued, shewn in the preceding chapters, a countenance makes infinitely more severe. How dense would Christianity be if such sedulous application, such unremitting succession of fatigues ! If religion consisted of hardships and self-denial, such days and evenings of exertion, such nights of perpetual sacrifices of quiet, such exile lights, as *Fashion* imposes, then indeed Christianity would no longer merit its title of being a "*reasonable service*;" the perfect slavery might be justly applied to us; we are told in the beautiful language of "*a service of perfect freedom*;" a service of which is "*to deliver us from all unrighteousness, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*"

A worldly temper, by which I mean to prefer worldly pleasures, worldly satisfactions, worldly advantages, to the immortal interests of the soul; and to let worldly considerations

fluence of surprise, when the heart is off its guard. It is not excited incidentally by the operation of external circumstances on the infirmity of nature ; but it is the vital spirit, the essential soul, the living principle of evil. It is not so much an act, as a state of being ; not so much an occasional complaint, as a tainted constitution of mind. If it does not always shew itself in extraordinary excesses, it has no perfect intermission. Even when it is not immediately tempted to break out into overt and specific acts, it is at work within, stirring up the heart to disaffection against holiness, and infusing a kind of moral disability to whatever is intrinsically right. It infects and depraves all the powers and faculties of the soul ; for it operates on the understanding, by blinding it to whatever is spiritually good ; on the will, by making it averse to God ; on the affections, by disordering and sensualizing them ; so that one may almost say to those who are under the supreme dominion of this spirit, what was said to the hosts of Joshua, “Ye cannot serve the Lord.”

This worldliness of mind is not at all commonly understood, and for the following reason :—People suppose that in this world our chief business is with the things of this world, and that to conduct the business of this world well, that is, conformably to moral principles, is the chief substance of moral and true goodness. Religion, if introduced at all into the system, only makes its occasional, and if I may so speak, its holiday appearance. To bring religion into every thing, is thought incompatible with the due attention to the things of this life. And so it would be, if by religion were meant *talking* about religion. The phrase, therefore, is : “ We cannot always be praying ; we must mind our business and our social duties as well as our devotion.” Worldly business being thus subjected to worldly, though in some degree moral, maxims, the mind during the conduct of business grows worldly ; and a continually increasing worldly spirit dims the sight and relaxes the moral principle on which the affairs of the world are conducted, as well as indispenses the mind for all the exercises of devotion.

But this temper, as far as relates to *business*, so much

ity; in their not carrying them on with a
mitting idea of responsibility. They are
in their not being always on their knees;
not bringing their religion from the
world: in their not bringing the spirit
devotions into the transactions of the
transforming their religion from a dry,
and inoperative system, into a lively,
and unceasing principle of action.

Though there are, blessed be God! ex-
alted stations, women who adorn their
session by a constant conduct; yet are
yet who are labouring hard to unite the
interests of earth and heaven? who,
not relinquish one jot of what *this* world
yet by no means renounce their hope
who do not think it unreasonable that
in the fullest possession of present plea-
sures with the most certain reversion
who, after living in the most unbound
of ease, vanity, and luxury, fancy that
attached of course to a life of which C
outward profession, and which has n

of a future account ? and who are acting on the wise principle of "the children of this world," in making the most of the present state of being from the conviction that there is no other to be expected ?

It must be owned, indeed, that faith in unseen things is at times lamentably weak and defective even in the truly pious ; and that it is so, is the subject of their grief and humiliation. O ! how does the real Christian take shame in the coldness of his belief, in the downness of his attainments ! How deeply does he lament that "when he would do good, evil is present with him !"—"that the life he now lives in the flesh, is" not, in the degree it ought to be, "by faith in the Son of God !" Yet one thing is clear ; however weak his belief may seem to be, it is evident that his actions are principally governed by it ; he evinces his sincerity to others by a life in some good degree analagous to the doctrines he professes : while to himself he has at least this conviction, that faint as his confidence may be at times, low as may be his hope, and feeble as his faith may seem, yet at the worst of times he would not exchange that faint measure of trust and hope for all the actual pleasures and possessions of his most splendid acquaintance ; and what is a proof of his sincerity he never seeks the cure of his dejection, where they seek theirs, in the world, but in God.

But as to the faith of worldly persons, however strong it may be in speculation, however orthodox their creed, however stout their profession, we cannot help fearing that it is a little defective in sincerity : for if there were in their minds a full persuasion of the truth of revelation, and of the eternal bliss it promises, would it not be obvious to them that there must be more diligence for its attainment ? We discover great ardour in carrying on worldly projects, because we believe the good which we are pursuing is real, and will reward the trouble of the pursuit ; we believe *that* good is to be attained by diligence, and we prudently proportion our earnestness to this conviction ; when therefore we see persons professing a lively faith in a better world, yet labouring little to obtain an interest in it,

present sacrifices of pleasure, with a view to eternal happiness, are such as apply to the concerns of life. That is, men object to a religious course as tending to rob them of pleasure which is within their reach, for remote enjoyment. They object to giving up good for the unseen. But do not all the actions of life come under the same class? we not give up present ease, and render up indulgence in order to acquire a future interest with our current money for the revenue which we know it will be a long time before we possess? Nay, do not the most worldly men incur an immediate inconvenience, by reducing their income, in order to insure to themselves a future subsistence?

Now "Faith which is the substance of things hoped for," is meant to furnish the soul with support, while it satisfies it as to the things which it has lent itself; just as a mortgage assures him that he is really not all the money in hand to spend. Those who truly believe the bible, n

considered as qualifications for the enjoyment of happiness. The neglect of doing this must proceed from one of these two causes; either they must leave their present course a safe and proper course; they must think that death is to produce some sudden surprising alteration in the human character. But the office of death is to transport us to a new state, to transform us to a new nature; the stroke of death is intended to effect our deliverance out of this world, and our introduction into another; but it is not likely to effect any sudden and wonderful, much less a change in our hearts or our taste: so far from this, that we are assured in Scripture, "that he that is filthy will be filthy still, and he that is holy will be holy still." Though we believe that death will completely cleanse the holy soul from its remaining pollution, that it will exchange defective sanctification into perfect purity, entangling temptation into complete freedom; suffering and affliction into health and joy; doubts and fears into perfect security, and oppressive cares into everlasting rest; yet there is no magic in the wand of death which will convert an unholy soul into an holy one. And it is awful to reflect, that the fleshly tempers as yet have the allowed predominance here, and will maintain it forever; that such as the will is when we close our eyes upon the things of time, such it will be when we open them on those of eternity. The mere act of death no more fits us for heaven, than the mere act of a mason who pulls down our old house fits us for a new one. If we die with our hearts running over with the love of the world, there is no prospect to lead us to expect that we shall rise with them full of the love of God. Death indeed will shew us to ourselves such as we are, but will not make us such as we are not: and it will be too late to be acquiring self-knowledge when we can no longer turn it to any account but that of tormenting ourselves. To illustrate this truth still farther by an allusion familiar to all persons I address: the drawing up the curtain at the theatre, though it serve to introduce us to the entertainments behind it, does not create in us any new faculties to understand or to relish those entertainments:

these must have been already acquired ; they must have been provided beforehand, and brought with us to the place, if we would relish the pleasures of the place ; for the entertainment can only operate on that taste we carry to it. It is too late to be acquiring when we ought to be enjoying.

That spirit of prayer and praise, those dispositions of love, meekness, " peace, quietness, and assurance ;" that indifference to the fashion of a world which is passing away ; that longing after deliverance from sin, that desire of holiness, together with all " the fruits of " the spirit" here, must surely make some part of our qualifications for the enjoyment of a world, the pleasures of which are all spiritual. And who can conceive any thing comparable to the awful surprise of a soul long immersed in the indulgences of vanity and pleasure, yet all the while lulled by the self-complacency of a religion of mere forms ; who, while it counted upon heaven as a thing of course, had made no preparation for it ! Who can conceive any surprise comparable to that of such a soul on shutting its eyes on a world of sense, of which all the objects and delights were so congenial to its nature, and opening them on a world of spirits of which all the characters of enjoyment are of a nature new, unknown, surprising, and specifically different ? pleasures more inconceivable to its apprehension and more unsuitable to its taste, than the gratifications of one sense are to the organs of another, or than the most exquisite works of art and genius to absolute imbecility of mind.

While we would with deep humility confess that we cannot purchase heaven by any works or right dispositions of our own ; while we gratefully acknowledge that it must be purchased for us by " Him who " loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood ;" yet let us remember that we have no reason to expect we could be capable of enjoying the pleasures of a heaven so purchased, without heavenly mindedness.

When those persons who are apt to expect as much comfort from religion as if their hearts were not full of the world, now and then, in a fit of honesty or low spirits, complain that Christianity does not make them

good and as happy as they were led to expect from the assurance, that "great peace have they who love the law of God," and that "they who wait on him shall want no manner of thing that is good;" when they lament that the paths of religion are not those "paths of pleasantness" which they were led to expect; their case reminds one of a celebrated physician, who used to say, that the reason why his prescriptions, which commonly cured the poor and the temperate, did so little good among his rich, luxurious patients, was, that while he was labouring to remove the disease by medicines, of which they only took drachms, minims, and scruples; they were inflaming it by a multiplicity of injurious aliments, which they swallowed ounces, pounds, and pints.

These fashionable Christians should be reminded, that there was no half engagement made for them at their baptism; that they are not partly their own and partly their Redeemer's. He that is "bought with a price," is the sole property of the purchaser. Faith does not consist merely in submitting the opinions of the understanding, but the dispositions of the heart: religion is not a sacrifice of sentiments, but of affections: it is not the tribute of fear extorted from a slave, but the voluntary homage of love paid by a child.

Neither does a Christian's piety consist in living in retreat, and railing at the practices of the world, while, perhaps, her heart is full of the spirit of that world at which she is railing: but it consists in *subduing* the spirit of the world, resisting its temptations, and opposing its practices, even while her duty obliges her to live in it.

Nor is the spirit or love of the world confined to those only who are making a figure in it; nor are its operations bounded by the precincts of the metropolis, or by the limited regions of first rate rank and splendor. She who inveighs against the luxury and excesses of London, and solaces herself in her own comparative sobriety, because her more circumscribed fortune compels her to take up with the second-hand pleasures of successive watering-places, if she pursue these plea-

tures with avidity, is governed by the same spirit, and the whole still narrower opportunities that he to the petty diversions of her provincial town, if she be busied in swelling and enlarging her smaller sphere of vanity and idleness, however she may comfort herself with her own comparative goodness, by railing at the unattainable pleasures of the watering-place, or at the still more unapproachable joys of the capital, is governed by the same spirit: for she who is as vain, as dissipated, and as extravagant as actual circumstances admit, would be as vain, as dissipated, and as extravagant as the gayest objects of her invective actually are, if she could change places with them. It is not merely by what we do that we can be sure the spirit of the world has no dominion over us, but by fairly considering what we should probably do if more were in our power.

The worldly Christian, if I may be allowed such a palpable contradiction in terms, must not imagine that she acquits herself of her religious obligations by paying in her mere weekly oblation of prayer. There is no covenant by which communion with God is restricted to an hour or two on the Sunday: she must not imagine she acquits herself by setting apart a few particular days in the year for the exercise of a periodical devotion, and then flying back to the world as eagerly as if she were resolved to repay herself with large interest for her short fit of self-denial; the stream of pleasure runs with a more rapid current, from having been interrupted by this forced obstruction. And the avidity with which we have seen certain persons of a still less correct character than the class we have been considering, return to a whole year's carnival, after the self-imposed penance of a passion week, gives a shrewd intimation that they considered the temporary abstraction less as an act of penitence for the past, than as a purchase of indemnity for the future. Such bare-weight protestants prudently condition for retaining the Popish doctrine of indulgences, which they buy, not indeed of the late spiritual court of Rome, but of that secret, self-acquitting judge, which ignorance of its own turpitude, and of the strict requirements of

divine law, has established supreme in the tribunal of every unrenowned heart.

But the practice of self-examination is impeded by idleness, which renders it peculiarly inconvenient to a busy and worldly : for the royal prophet (who was, however, himself as likely as any one to be acquainted

with the difficulties peculiar to greatness) has annexed to "communing with our own heart,"

we should "*be still.*" Now this clause of the injunction annihilates the other, by rendering it incom-

patible with the present habits of fashionable life, of which *idleness* is clearly not one of the constituents. It is

idle, however, greatly to assist those who do not altogether decline the practice, if they were to establish

a rule the habit of detecting certain suspicious practices, by realizing them, as it were, to their own

eyes, through the means of drawing them out in writing, and of placing them before their eyes clothed in language ; for there is nothing that so effectually

exposes an absurdity which has hitherto passed muster with the ignorant of such an inquisition, as giving it shape, and

form, and body. How many things which now daily work themselves into the habit, and pass current without inquiry, would then shock us by their

manifest inconsistency ! Who, for instance, could bear the sight of such a debtor and creditor account as this :—*Item*—So many card-parties, balls, and operas

due to me in the following year, for so many man-hours of prayers and meditations paid beforehand during

the last six days in Lent ? With how much indignation would this suggestion may be treated ; whatever offence may be taken at such a combination of the serious and the ludicrous ; however we may revolt at the

idea of such a composition with our Maker, when put into so many words ; does not the habitual course of

life go near to realize such a statement ?

It is "a Christian's *race*," as a venerable Prelate* says, "is not run at so many *heats*," but is a continuous

course, a regular progress, by which we are continually gaining ground upon sin, and approaching nearer to the kingdom of God.

* Bishop Hopkins.

to be resorted to as long as Christiani-
as the world, shall last. It is well to
even for a short time, not only fre-
but even from the lawful pursuits
laudable concerns of life ; and, as
as it were, the space which divides

*'Tis greatly wise to talk with our
And ask them what report they bear
And how they might have borne it*

Yet as to those who seek a short
mere form ; who dignify with the
retirement, a week in which it is
to be seen in town ; who retire with
lution to return to the maxims,
the spirit of that world which they
renounce ; is it not to be feared th
sion, which does not even pretend t
ciple, but merely suspends the act,
set a keener edge on the appetite fo
are quitting ? Is it not to be feare
fly back with redoubled violence fr
naturally bent ? that by varnishing
with the transient externals of a for
piety, they may the more dangero

ing a set of hardships, which *must* be occasionally puntered, in order to procure a peaceable enjoyment the long respite?—a short penalty for a long pleasure? that these severe conditions thus fulfilled, the penitented Christian having paid the annual demand of rigorous requisition, she may now lawfully return to her natural state; the old reckoning being adjusted, she may begin a new score, and receive the reward of punctual obedience, in the resumed indulgence of her gratifications which she had for a short time laid aside as an hard task to please an hard master: but this is not performed, and the master appeased, the mind may recover its natural bent, in joyfully returning to the objects of its real choice? Whereas, is it not clear on the other hand, that if the religious exercises had produced the effect which it is the nature of true religion to produce, the penitent *could* not return with her old vivacious alacrity to those habits of the world, from which the pious weekly manuals through which she has been labouring with the punctuality of an almanac to the day, and the accuracy of a bead-roll as to the number, were intended by the devout authors to regulate their reader?

I am far from insinuating, that this literal sequestration ought to be prolonged throughout the year, or that all the days of business are to be made equally days of solemnity and continued meditation. This earth is the place in which a much larger portion of a common Christian's time must be assigned to action than to contemplation. Women of the higher class were not shut into the world to shun society, but to improve it. They were not designed for the cold and visionary virtues of solitudes and monasteries, but for the amiable, pleasant, and useful offices of social life: they are of a religion which does not impose idle austerities, but enjoins active duties; a religion which demands most benevolent actions, and which requires them to be sanctified by the purest motives; a religion which does not condemn its followers to the comparatively easy task of seclusion from the world, but assigns them the more difficult province of living uncorrected in it; a religion which, while it forbids them

"to follow a multitude to do evil," includes in the prohibition the sin of doing *nothing*, and which moreover enjoins them to be followers of him "who was about doing *good*."

But may we not reasonably contend, that though the same sequestration is not required, yet that the same *spirit* and *temper* which we would hope is though necessary even by those on whom we are animadverting, during the occasional humiliation, must, by every real Christian, be extended throughout all the periods of the year? And when that is really the case, when once the spirit of religion shall indeed govern the heart, it will not only animate her religious actions and employments, but will gradually extend itself to the directing her conversation, will discipline her thoughts, influence her common business, restrain her indulgencies, and sanctify her very pleasures.

But it seems that many, who entertain a *general* notion of Christian duty, do not consider it as of universal and unremitting obligation, but rather as a duty binding at times on all, and at all times on some. To the attention of such we would recommend that very explicit address of our Lord on the subject of self-denial, the temper directly opposed to a worldly spirit: "And he said unto them ALL, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross DAILY." Those who think self-denial not of *universal* obligation, will observe the word *all*, and those who think the obligation not *constant* will attend to the term *daily*. These two little words cut up by the root all the occasional religious observances grafted on a worldly life; all transient, periodical, and temporary acts of piety, which some seem willing to commute for a life of habitual thoughtlessness and vanity.

There is indeed scarcely a more pitiable being than one who, instead of making her religion the informing principle of all she does, has only just enough to keep her in continual fear; who drudges through her sainted exercises with a superstitious kind of terror, while her general life shows that the love of holiness is not the governing principle in her heart; who seems to suffer all the pains and penalties of Christianity, but is a stran-

to "that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." Let it not be thought a ludicrous invention : the author hazard the producing a real illustration of his remarks, in the instance of a lady of this stamp returning from church on a very cold day, and returning with a good deal of self-complacency because she had suffered in the performance of her duty, and boasted herself with emphatically adding, "that she hoped however it would *answer*."

There is this striking difference between the real and the worldly Christian, the latter does not complain of the strictness of the divine law, but of the deficiency of his own performance ; while the worldly Christian is troubled at his own failures, but deploras the strictness of the divine requisitions. The one wishes God would expect less, the other prays for strength to do more. When the worldly person hears real Christians speak of their own low state, and acknowledge their extreme unworthiness ; he really believes himself to be worse than those who make no such humiliating confessions. He does not know that a mind which is at once deeply convinced of its own corruption, and of the purity of the divine law, is so keenly sensible to the perception of all sin as to be humbled by the commission of such as is comparatively small, and that those who have less correct views of Gospel holiness, hardly allow to be sin at all. Such an one will say, "Now mine eye *seeth* Thee."

But there is no permanent comfort in any religion : of that by which the diligent Christian strive that all his actions shall have the love of God for their motive, and the glory of God, as well as his own salvation, for their end ; while to go about to balance good and bad actions one against the other, and to seek comfort in the occasional predominance of the former, while the cultivation of the principle from which good should spring is neglected, is not the road to all the peaceful fruits of the spirit to which true Christianity conducts the humble and penitent believer. After all we can do, Christian tempers and a Christian spirit are the true criterion of a Christian character, and serve to furnish the most unequivocal test of

our attainments in religion. Our doctrines may be sound, but they may not be influential; our actions may be correct, but they may want the sanctifying principle; our frames and feelings may *seem*, nay, they may *be* devout, but they may be heightened by mere animal fervour; even if genuine, they are seldom lasting; and to many pious persons they are not given: it is therefore the Christian tempers which most infallibly indicate the sincere Christian, and best prepare him for the heavenly state.

I am aware that a better cast of characters than those we have been contemplating; that even the amiable and the well-disposed, who, while they want courage to resist what they have too much principle to think right, and too much sense to justify, will yet plead for the *palliating* system, and accuse these remarks of unnecessary rigour. They will declare "that really they are as religious as they can be; they wish they were better; they have little satisfaction in the life they are leading, yet they cannot break with the world; they cannot fly in the face of custom; it does not become individuals like them to oppose the torrent of fashion." Beings so interesting, abounding with engaging qualities; who not only feel the beauty of goodness, but reverence the truths of Christianity, and are awfully looking for a general judgment, we are grieved to hear lament "that they only do as others do," when they are perhaps themselves of such rank and importance, that if they would begin to do right, others would be brought to do as they did. We are grieved to hear them indolently assert, that "they wish it were otherwise," when they possess the power to *make* it otherwise, by setting an example which they know would be followed. We are sorry to hear them content themselves with declaring, that "they have not the courage to be singular," when they must feel, by seeing the influence of their example in worse things, that there would be no such great singularity in piety itself, if once *they* became sincerely pious. Besides, this diffidence does not break out on other occasions. They do not blush to be quoted as the opposers of an old mode, or the inventors of a new one; nor are they equally

backward in being the first to appear in a strange fashion, such an one as often excites wonder, and sometimes even offends against delicacy. Let not then diffidence be pleaded as an excuse only on occasions wherein courage would be virtue.

Will it be thought too harsh a question if we venture to ask these gentle characters who are thus entrenching themselves in the imaginary safety of surrounding multitudes, and who say "We only do as others do," whether they are willing to run the tremendous risk of consequences, and *to fare as others fare*?

But while these plead the authority of Fashion as a sufficient reason for their conformity to the world, one who has spoken with a paramount authority, has positively said, "Be ye *not* conformed to the world." Nay, it is urged as the very badge and distinction by which the character opposite to the Christian is to be marked, "that the friendship of the world is *enmity* with God."

Temptation to conform to the world was never perhaps more irresistible than in the days which immediately preceded the Deluge: and no man could ever have pleaded the *fashion* in order to justify a criminal assimilation with the reigning manners, with more propriety than the Patriarch Noah. He had the two grand and contending objects of terror to encounter which we have; the fear of ridicule, and the fear of destruction; the dread of sin, and the dread of singularity. Our cause of alarm is at least equally pressing with his; for it does not appear, even while he was actually obeying the Divine command in providing the means of his future safety, that he *saw* any actual symptoms of the impending ruin. So that in one sense *he* might have truly pleaded as an excuse for slackness of preparation, "that all things continued as they were from the beginning;" while many of us, though the storm is actually begun, never think of providing the refuge: it is true he was "warned of God," and he provided "by faith." But are not we also warned of God? have we not had a fuller revelation? have we not seen Scripture illustrated, prophecy fulfilling, with every awful circumstance that can either quicken the most sluggish remissness, or confirm the feeblest faith?

Besides, the Patriarch's plea for following the fashion was stronger than you can produce. While you may see that many are going wrong, he saw that none were going right. "All flesh had corrupted his way before God;" whilst, blessed be God! you have still instances enough of piety to keep you in countenance. While you lament that *the world* seduces you, (for every one has a little world of his own,) your world perhaps is only a petty neighbourhood, a few streets and squares; but the Patriarch had really the contagion of an whole united world to resist; he had literally the example of the whole face of the earth to oppose. The "fear of man" also would then have been a more pardonable fault, when the lives of the same individuals who were likely to excite respect or fear, was prolonged many ages, than it can be in the short period now assigned to human life. How lamentable then that human opinion should operate so powerfully, when it is but the breath of a being so frail and so short-lived,

That he doth cease to be,
Ere one can say he is!

You who find it so difficult to withstand the individual allurements of one modish acquaintance, would, if you had been in the Patriarch's case, have concluded the struggle to be quite ineffectual, and sunk under the supposed fruitlessness of resistance. "Myself," would you not have said? "or at most my little family of eight persons can never hope to stop this torrent of corruption; I lament the fruitlessness of opposition; I deplore the necessity of conformity with the prevailing system; but it would be a foolish presumption to hope that *one* family can effect a change in the state of the world." In your own case, however, it is not certain to how wide an extent the hearty union of even fewer persons in such a cause might reach: at least is it nothing to do what the Patriarch did? Was it nothing to preserve himself from the general destruction? Was it nothing to deliver his own soul? Was it nothing to rescue the souls of his whole family?

A wise man will never differ from the world in trifles. It is certainly a mark of a sound judgment to comply with custom whenever we safely can; such compliance

gthens our influence, by reserving to ourselves the ter weight of authority on those occasions, when conscience obliges us to differ. Those who are ent will cheerfully conform to all the innocent es of the world ; but those who are Christians will rupulous in defining which are really innocent ous to their conformity to them. Not what the d, but what the Gospel calls innocent will be d at the grand scrutiny to have been really so. A eet Christian will take due pains to be convinced he ht before he will presume to be singular : but from nstant he is persuaded that the Gospel is true, and world of course wrong, he will no longer risk his y by following multitudes, or hazard his soul by ng it on human opinion. All our most dangerous akes arise from our not constantly referring our tice to the standard of Scripture, instead of the able standard of human estimation by which it is offible to fix the real value of characters. For this r standard in some cases determines those to be l who do not run all the lengths in which the no usly bad allow themselves. The Gospel has ar ersal, the world has a local standard of goodness. ertain societies certain vices alone are dishonoura- such as covetousness and cowardice ; while those of which our Saviour has said, that they which mit them " shall not inherit the kingdom of God," aet nothing from the respect some persons receive , those very characters whom the Almighty has ex sly and awfully declared " He will judge,"* ar ived, are admired, are caressed, in that which call f the best company.

ut to weigh our actions by one standard now, when know they will be judged by another hereafter ld be reckoned the height of absurdity in any factions but those which involve the interests o nity. " How readeſt thou ?" is a more specific tion than any comparative view of our own habit a the habits of others : and at the final bar it wil f little avail that our actions have risen above thoſ

* Hebrews, xiii. 4.

of bad men, if our views and principles shall be found to have been in opposition to the Gospel of Christ.

Nor is *their* practice more commendable, when at ever on the watch to pick out the worst actions of good men, by way of justifying their own conduct on the comparison. The faults of the best men, "for there is not a just man upon earth who sinneth not," can in no wise justify the errors of the worst : and it is not invariably, the example of even good men that we must take for our unerring rule of conduct : nor is it by a single action that either they or we shall be judged ; for in that case who could be saved ? but it is by the general prevalence of right principles and good habits, and Christian tempers ; by the predominate of holiness, and righteousness, and temperance in the life, and by the power of humility, faith, and love in the heart.

CHAP. XX.

On the leading Doctrines of Christianity.—The Corruption of Human Nature.—The Doctrine of Redemption.—The Necessity of a Change of Heart, and of the Divine Influences to produce that Change.—With a Sketch of the Christian Character.

THE author having in this little work taken a view of the false notions often imbibed in early life from a bad education, and of their pernicious effects ; and having attempted to point out the respective remedies to these ; she would now draw all that has been said to a point, and declare plainly what she humbly conceives to be the source whence all these false notions and this wrong conduct really proceed : the prophet Jeremiah shall answer : " It is because they have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and have hewn out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." It is an ignorance past belief of what true Christianity really is : the remedy, therefore, and the only remedy that can be applied with any prospect of success, is RELIGION, and by Religion she would be understood to mean the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

has been before hinted, that Religion should be taught at an early period of life ; that children should be brought up “ in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” The manner in which they should be taught likewise with great plainness been suggested ; that it could be done in so lively and familiar a manner as to make Religion amiable, and her ways to appear, what they really are, “ ways of pleasantness.” And a sketch has been given of the genius of Christianity, by which her amiableness would more clearly appear. But this, being a subject of such vast importance compared with which every other subject sinks into nothing ; it seems not sufficient to speak on the principles and duties of Christianity in detached parts, it is of importance to point out, though in a brief imperfect manner, the mutual dependance of one principle upon another, and the influence which these principles have upon the heart and life, so that the duties of Christianity may be seen to grow out of its doctrines : which it will appear that Christian virtue differs essentially from Pagan : it is of a quite different kind, its plant itself is different, it comes from a different source, and grows in a different soil.

It will be seen how the humbling doctrine of the corruption of human nature, which has followed from the corruption of our first parents, makes way for the most brilliant display of redeeming love. How from the abashed thought that “ we are all as sheep going astray, every one in his own way :” that none can return to the shepherd of our souls, “ except the Father draw him in :” that “ the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned :” how from this humiliating view of the *essence*, as well as the *corruption* of human nature, we are to turn to that animating doctrine, the offer of *divine assistance*. So that though human nature will appear from this view in a deeply degraded state, and consequently *all* have cause for humility, yet not one cause for despair : the disease indeed is dreadful, but a physician is at hand, both able and willing to cure us : though we are naturally without “ strength or help is laid upon One that is mighty.” If the

Gospel discover to us our lapsed state, it discovers also the means of our restoration to the divine image and favour. It not only discovers, but impresses this image; it not only gives us the description, but the attainment of this favour; and while the word of God suggests the remedy, his Spirit applies it.

We should observe then, that the doctrines of our Saviour are, if I may so speak, with a beautiful consistency, all woven into one piece. We should get such a view of their reciprocal dependence as to be persuaded that without a deep sense of our own corruptions we can never seriously believe in a Saviour, because the substantial and acceptable belief in Him must always arise from the conviction of our want of Him; that without a firm persuasion that the Holy Spirit can alone restore our fallen nature, repair the ruins of sin, and renew the image of God upon the heart, we never shall be brought to serious humble prayer for repentance and restoration; and that, without this repentance, there is no salvation: for though Christ has died for us, and consequently to him alone we must look as a Saviour, yet he has himself declared that he will save none but true penitents.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF HUMAN CORRUPTION.

To come now to a more particular statement of these doctrines. When an important edifice is about to be erected, a wise builder will dig deep, and look well to the foundations, knowing that without this the fabric will not be likely to stand. The foundation of the Christian religion, out of which the whole structure may be said to arise, appears to be the doctrine of the fall of man from his original state of righteousness; and the corruption and helplessness of human nature, which are the consequences of this fall, and which is the natural state of every one born into the world. To this doctrine it is important to conciliate the minds, more especially of young persons, who are peculiarly disposed to turn away from it as a morose, unamiable, and gloomy idea. They are apt to accuse those who are more strict and serious, of unnecessary severity, and

aspect them of thinking unjustly ill of mankind. Of the reasons which prejudice the inexperienced against the doctrine in question, appear to be the following:

Young persons themselves have seen little of the world. In pleasurable society the world puts on its most amiable appearance; and that softness and urbanity which prevail, particularly amongst persons of fashion, are liable to be mistaken for more than they really worth. The opposition to this doctrine in youth, arises partly from ingenuousness of heart, partly from a habit of indulging themselves in favourable suppositions respecting the world, rather than of seeking truth, which is always the grand thing to be pursued, and partly from the popularity of the tenet, *every body is so wonderfully good!*

This error in youth has however a still deeper foundation, which is their not having a right standard of moral good and evil themselves, in consequence of having already partaking of the very corruption which is to be shunned, and which, in perverting the will, darkens understanding also; they are therefore apt to have a very strict sense of duty, or of the necessity of a moral and religious motive to every act.

Moreover, young people usually do not know themselves. Not having yet been much exposed to temptation, owing to the prudent restraints in which they have been kept, they little suspect to what lengths in sin they themselves are liable to be transported, nor how far others actually are carried who are set free from those restraints.

Having laid down these as some of the causes of error on this point, I proceed to observe on what strong ground the doctrine itself stands.

Profane history abundantly confirms this truth: the story of the world being in fact little else than the story of the crimes of the human race. Even though the annals of remote ages lie so involved in obscurity, some degree of uncertainty attaches itself to many of the events recorded, yet this one melancholy truth is always clear, that most of the miseries which have

been brought on mankind, have proceeded from this general depravity.

The world we now live in furnishes abundant proof of this truth. In a world formed on the deceitful theory of those who assert the innocence and dignity of man, almost all the professions, since they would have been rendered useless by such a state of innocence, would not have existed. Without sin we may nearly presume there would have been no sickness; so that every medical professor is a standing evidence of this sad truth. Sin not only brought sickness but death into the world; consequently every funeral presents a more irrefragable argument than a thousand sermons. Had man persevered in his original integrity, there could have been no litigation, for there would be no contests about property in a world where none would be inclined to attack it. Professors of law, therefore, from the attorney who prosecutes for a trespass, to the pleader who defends a criminal, or the judge who condemns him, loudly confirm the doctrine. Every victory by sea or land should teach us to rejoice with humiliation, for conquest itself brings a terrible, though splendid attestation to the truth of the fall of man.

Even those who deny the doctrine, act universally more or less on the principle. Why do we all secure our houses with bolts, and bars, and locks? Do we take these steps to defend our lives or property from any particular fear? from any suspicion of *this* neighbour, or *that* servant, or the *other* invader? No:—It is from a practical conviction of the common depravity; from a constant, pervading, but undefined dread of impending evil arising from the sense of general corruption. Are not prisons built, and laws enacted, on the same practical principle?

But, not to descend to the more degraded part of our species. Why in the fairest transaction of business is nothing executed without bonds, receipts, and notes of hand? Why does not a perfect confidence in the *dignity of human nature* abolish all these securities; if not between enemies, or people indifferent to each other, yet at least between friends and kindred, and the most honourable connections? why, but because

of that universal suspicion between man, and man, which, by all we see, and hear, and feel, is become interwoven with our very make? Though we do not entertain any *individual* suspicion, nay, though we have the strongest *personal* confidence, yet the acknowledged principle of conduct has this doctrine for its basis. "I will take a receipt, though it were from "my brother," is the established voice of mankind; or, as I have heard it more artfully put, by a fallacy of which the very disguise discovers the principle, "Think "every man honest, but deal with him as if, you knew "him to be otherwise." And as in a state of innocence, the beasts, it is presumed, would not have bled for the sustenance of man, so their parchments would not have been wanted as instruments of his security against his fellow man. *

But the grand arguments for this doctrine must be drawn from the Holy Scriptures: and these, besides implying it almost continually, expressly assert it; and that in instances too numerous to be all of them brought forward here. Of these may I be allowed to produce a few? "God saw that the wickedness of "man was great, and that every imagination of the "thoughts of his heart was only evil continually:"—"God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for *all flesh* had corrupted his way upon the "earth. And it *repented* the Lord that he had made "man on the earth, and it *grieved him at his heart.*"† This is a picture of mankind *before* the flood, and the doctrine receives additional confirmation in Scripture, when it speaks of the times which followed after that tremendous judgment had taken place. The Psalms abound in lamentations on the depravity of man "They are *all* gone aside; there is *none* that doeth "good, no not *one.*"—"In *thy* fight," says David, addressing the Most High, "shall *no man living* be justi-

* Bishop Butler distinctly declares this truth to be evident, from experience as well as Revelation, "that this world exhibits an idea of a "RUIN;" and he will hazard much who ventures to assert that Butler defended Christianity upon principles unconsistant to *reason, philosophy, or sound experience.*

† Genesis vi.

sied." Job, in his usual lofty strain of interrogation, asks, "What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold the heavens are not clean in *His* sight, how much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?"

Nor do the scriptures speak of this corruption as arising only from occasional temptation, or from mere extrinsic causes. The wise man tells us, that "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;" the prophet Jeremiah assures us, "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and David plainly states the doctrine: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Can language be more explicit?

The New-Testament corroborates the Old. Our Lord's reproof of Peter seems to take the doctrine for granted: "Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man;" clearly intimating, that the *ways of man* are opposite to the ways of God. And our Saviour in that affecting discourse to his disciples, observes to them, that as they were by his grace made *different* from others, therefore they must expect to be hated by those who were so unlike them. And it should be particularly observed, as another proof, that the world is wicked, that our Lord considered "*the world*" as opposed to him and to his disciples. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."† St. John, writing to his Christian church, states the same truth: "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."

Man in his natural and unbelieving state is likewise represented as in a state of *guilt*, and under the displeasure of Almighty God. "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

* Perhaps one reason why the faults of the most eminent Saints are recorded in Scripture, is to add *fresh* confirmation to this doctrine. If Abraham, Moses, Noah, Elijah, David, and Peter sinned, who, we presume to say, has escaped the universal taint?

† John, xi. 29.

Here, however, if it be objected, that the heathen who never heard of the Gospel, will not assuredly be judged by it, the Saviour's answer to such curious inquirers concerning the state of others is, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." It is enough for us to believe that God, who will judge the world in righteousness," will judge all men according to their opportunities. The heathen to whom he has not sent the light of the Gospel will probably not be judged by the Gospel. But with whatever mercy he may judge those who, living in a land of darkness, are without knowledge of his revealed law, *our* business is not with them, but with ourselves. It is *our* business to consider what mercy he will extend to those who, living in a Christian country, abounding with means and ordinances, where the Gospel is preached in its purity ; it is *our* business to inquire how he will deal with those who shut their eyes to its beams, who close their ears to its truths. For an unbeliever who has passed his life in the meridian of Scripture light, or for an outward but unfruitful professor of Christianity, I know not what hope the Gospel holds out.

The natural state of man is again thus described : "The carnal mind is enmity against God ; (awful thought !) for it is not subject to the law of God, "neither indeed *can* be. So then they that are in the "flesh *cannot* please God." What the Apostle means by *being in the flesh*, is evident by what follows ; for speaking of those whose hearts were changed by divine grace, he says, "But ye are *not* in the flesh, but in the "spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you : "that is, you are not now in your natural state : the change that has passed on your minds by the influence of the Spirit of God is so great, that your state may properly be called "being in the Spirit." It may be further observed, that the same Apostle, writing to the churches of Galatia, tells them, that the natural corruption of the human heart is continually opposing the spirit of holiness which influences the regenerate. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit "against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to "the other : which passage by the way, at the same

time that it proves the corruption of the heart, proves the necessity of divine influences. And the Apostle, with respect to himself, freely confesses and deeply laments the workings of this corrupt principle: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

It has been objected by some who have opposed this doctrine, that the same Scriptures which speak of mankind as being *sinners*, speak of some as being *righteous*; and hence they would argue, that though this depravity of human nature may be *general*, yet it cannot be *universal*. This objection when examined, serves only, like all other objections against the truth, to establish that which it was intended to destroy. For what do the Scriptures assert respecting the righteous? That there are some whose principles, views, and conduct, are so different from the rest of the world, and from what theirs themselves once were, that these persons are honoured with the peculiar title of the "sons of God." But no where do the Scriptures assert that even these are *sinless*; on the contrary, their *faults* are frequently mentioned; and persons of this class are moreover represented as those on whom a great *change* has passed: as having been formerly "dead in trespasses and sins;" but as "being now called out of darkness into light;" as *translated* into the kingdom of "God's dear Son;" as "having passed from death to life." And St. Paul put this matter past all doubt, by expressly asserting, that, "*they were all by nature the children of wrath even as others.*"

It might be well to ask certain persons, who oppose the doctrine in question, and who also seem to talk as if they thought there were many *sinless* people in the world, how they expect that such *sinless* people will be saved? (though indeed to talk of an *innocent* person being *saved* involves a palpable contradiction in terms, of which those who use the expression do not seem to be aware; it is talking of curing a man already in health.) "Undoubtedly," such will say, "they will be received into those abodes of bliss prepared for the righteous."—But be it remembered, there is but *one* way to these blissful abodes, and that is, through

Jesus Christ : "For there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved." If we ask whom did Christ come to save ? the Scripture directly answers, "He came into the world to save *sinners* :"—"His name was called Jesus, because he came to save his people *from their sins*." When St. John was favoured with a heavenly vision, he tells us, that he beheld "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes : " that one of the heavenly inhabitants informed him who they were : " These are they who come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in his Temple ; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them ; they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat ; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

We may gather from this description what these glorious and happy beings once were ; they were *sinful* creatures : their robes were not *spotless* : " They had washed them, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They are likewise generally represented as having been once a *suffering* people : they came out of great tribulation. They are described as having overcome the great tempter of mankind, "by the blood of the Lamb : " * as they who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth : " as "redeemed from among men." † And their *employment* in the regions of bliss is a farther confirmation of the doctrine of which we are treating. "The great multitude," &c. &c. we are told, "stood and cried with a loud voice, Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb !" Here we see they ascribe their salvation to Christ, and consequently their

* Rev. xii. 11.

† Rev. xiv. 4.

present happiness to his atoning blood. And in another of their celestial anthems, they say in like manner, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, tongue, and people, and nation."

By all this it is evident that men of any other description than *redeemed sinners* must gain admittance to heaven some other way than that which the Scriptures point out; and also that when they shall arrive there, so different will be their employment, that they must have an anthem peculiar to themselves.

Nothing is more adapted to the "casting down of high imaginations," and to promote humility, than this reflection, that heaven is always in Scripture pointed out not as the reward of the innocent, but as the hope of the penitent. This, while it is calculated to "exclude boasting," the temper the most opposite to the Gospel, is yet the most suited to afford comfort; for were heaven promised as the reward of innocence, who could attain to it? but being, as it is, the promised portion of faith and repentance, purchased for us by the blood of Christ, and offered to every penitent believer—Who is compelled to miss it?

It is urged that the belief of this doctrine of our corruption produces many ill effects, and therefore it should be discouraged.—That it does *not* produce those ill effects, when not misunderstood or partially represented, we shall attempt to show: at the same time let it be observed, if it be really *true*, we must not reject it on account of any of these supposed ill-consequences. Truth may often be attended with disagreeable effects, but if it be truth it must still be pursued. If for instance, treason should exist in a country, every one knows the disagreeable effects which will follow such a conviction; but our *not believing* such treason to exist, will not prevent such effect following it: on the contrary, our believing it may prevent the fatal consequences.

It is objected, that this doctrine debases and degrades human nature, and that finding fault with the build-

ing is only another way of finding fault with the architect. To the first part of this objection it may be remarked, that if man be really a corrupt, fallen being, it is proper to represent him as such : the fault then lies in the *man*, and not in the *doctrine*, which only states the *truth*. As to the inference which is supposed to follow, namely, that it throws the fault upon the Creator, it proceeds upon the false supposition that man's present corrupt state is the state in which he was originally created : the contrary of which is the truth. " God made man upright, but he hath found out many inventions."

It is likewise objected, that as this doctrine must give us such a bad opinion of mankind, it must consequently produce ill-will, hatred, and suspicion. But it should be remembered, that it gives us no worse an opinion of other men than it gives us of ourselves ; and such views of ourselves have a very salutary effect, inasmuch as they have a tendency to produce *humility* ; and humility is not likely to produce ill-will to others, " for only from pride cometh contention : " and as to the views it gives us of mankind, it represents us as *fellow sufferers* ; and surely the consideration that we are *companions in misery* is not calculated to produce hatred. The truth is, these effects, where they have actually followed, have followed from a false and partial view of the subject.

Old persons who have seen much of the world, and who have little religion, are apt to be strong in their belief of man's actual corruption ; but not taking it up on Christian grounds, this belief in them shows itself in a narrow and malignant temper ; in uncharitable judgment and harsh opinions, in individual suspicion, and in too general a disposition to hatred.

Suspicion and hatred also are the uses to which Rochefaucault and the other French philosophers have converted this doctrine : their acute minds intuitively found the corruption of man, and they saw it without its concomitant and correcting doctrine : they allowed man to be a depraved creature, but disallowed his high original : they found him in a low state, but did not conceive of him as having fallen from a better.

They represent him rather as a brute than an apostate; not taking into the account that his present degraded nature and depraved faculties are not his original state: that he is not such as he came out of the hands of his Creator, but such as he has been made by sin. Nor do they know that he has not even now lost all remains of his primitive dignity, all traces of his divine original, but is still capable of a restoration more glorious

Than is dreamt of in their philosophy.

Perhaps, too, they know from what they *feel*, all the *evil* to which man is inclined; but they do not know, for they have not felt, all the good of which he is capable by the superinduction of the divine principle: thus they asperse human nature, instead of representing it fairly, and in so doing it is *they* who calumniate the great Creator.

The doctrine of corruption is likewise accused of being a gloomy, discouraging doctrine, and an enemy to joy and comfort. Now suppose this objection true in its fullest extent. Is it any way unreasonable that a being fallen into a state of sin, under the displeasure of Almighty God, should feel *seriously alarmed* at being in such a state? Is the condemned criminal blamed because he is not *merry*? And would it be esteemed a kind action to persuade him that he is *not* condemned in order to make him so?

But this charge is *not* true in the sense intended by those who bring it forward. Those who believe this doctrine are *not* the most gloomy people. When, indeed, any one by the influence of the Holy Spirit is brought to view his state as it really is, a state of guilt and danger, it is natural that *fear* should be excited in his mind, but it is such a fear as impels him "to flee from the wrath to come:" it is such a fear as moved Noah to "prepare an ark to the saving of his house." Such an one will likewise feel *sorrow*; not however "the sorrow of the world which worketh death," but that godly sorrow which worketh repentance. Such an one is said to be driven to *despair* by this doctrine; but it is the despair of his own ability to save himself; it is that wholesome despair of his own merits produ-

y conviction and humility which drives him to a better refuge ; and such an one is in a proper posture to receive the glorious doctrine we are next about to contemplate ; namely,

AT GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVED IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.

In this doctrine it is of the first importance to form just views, for as it is the only doctrine which can keep a humble penitent from despair, so, on the other hand, great care must be taken that false views of it do not lead us to presumption. In order to understand it aright, we must not fill our minds with our own reasonings upon it, which is the way in which some good men have been misled, but we must betake ourselves to the Scriptures, wherein we shall find the doctrine set forth so plainly as to shew that the mistakes have not arisen from a want of clearness in the Scriptures, but from a desire to make it bend to some favourite notions. As it has been totally rejected by some, it has been perverted by others, as hardly to retain any resemblance to the Scripture doctrine of redemption. We read in the beautiful passage last quoted, *its source*—the love of God to a lost world ;—*who* the Redeemer—the Son of God ;—the *end* for which this plan was formed and executed—“ that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—“ I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.”—“ He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”—“ He would not have any perish, but that they should come to repentance.” There is nothing in all this to promote gloominess. On the contrary, if kindness and mercy have a tendency to warm the heart, here is every incentive to joy and fulness. Christianity looks kindly towards all, with peculiar tenderness on such as, from humbled views of their own unworthiness, might be led to feel themselves excluded :—we are expressly told “ Christ died for *all* :”—that “ he tasted death for

vour :—and the Saviour in the plainest
himself to all—declaring to “all th
“earth”—“Look unto me and be saved
fore an undeniable truth, that no one
want of a Saviour, but for *rejecting* him
are excluded who do not exclude them
unhappily do, who “reject the counsel
“themselves, and so receive the grace of

But to suppose that because Christ h
“sins of the whole world,” the whole wo
fore be *saved*, is a most fatal mistake.
book which tells us that “Christ died
have likewise this awful admonition ;
“gate, and *few* there be that find it ;” w
it be understood of the immediate rec
Gospel, or of the final use which was t
made of it, gives no encouragement to
will be qualified to partake of its pr
whilst it declares that “there is no other
“by we may be saved but by the name
likewise declares

THAT “WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN
“THE LORD.”

opened for sin and for uncleanness," if we would *crisped*. "All, indeed, who are *athirst* are invited to use of the waters of life freely;" but if we feel no *thirst*;" if we do not *drink*, their saving qualities are of no avail.

It is the more necessary to insist on this in the present age as there is a worldly and fashionable, as well as a sectarian Antinomianism: there lamentably prevails in the world an unwarranted assurance of Salvation, founded on a slight, vague, and general confidence in what Christ has done and suffered for us, as if the great object of his doing and suffering had been to emancipate us from all obligations to duty and obedience; and as if, because he died for sinners, we might therefore safely and comfortably go on to live in sin, contenting ourselves with now and then a transient, partial, and unmeaning avowal of our unworthiness, and obligation, and the all-sufficiency of *his* atonement. The discharge of this quit-rent, of which all the cost consists in the acknowledgment, the sensual, the worldly, and the vain hope to find a refuge in heaven, when banished from the enjoyments of this world. But this supine and indolent Christianity is nowhere taught in the Bible. The faith inculcated *there* is not a lazy, professional faith, but that faith which "produceth *obedience*," that faith which "worketh by love," that faith of which the practical language is—"Strive that you may enter in;"—"So *run* that you may obtain;"—"So *fight* that you may lay hold on eternal life;"—that faith which directs us "not to be weary of well-doing;"—which says, "*Work* out your own salvation;"—never forgetting at the same time, "that it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do." The contrary doctrine is implied in the very name of the Redeemer: "And his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people *from* their sins." *in* their sins.—Are those rich supplies of grace which the Gospel offers; are those abundant aids of the Spirit which it promises, tendered to the *slothful* only.—God will have all his gifts improved. Grace must be used, or it will be withdrawn. The Almighty looks it not derogatory to his free grace to declare

that "those only who do his commandments have right to the tree of life." And the Scriptures represent it as not derogatory to the *sacrifice* of Christ, to follow his example in well-doing. The only caution is, that we must not work in our own strength, nor bring in our contribution of works as if in aid of the supposed deficiency of His merits.

For we must not in our *over-caution*, fancy that because Christ has "redeemed us from the curse of the law," we are therefore without a law. In acknowledging Christ as a deliverer, we must not forget that he is a law-giver too, and that we are expressly commanded "to fulfil the law of Christ:" if we wish to know what his laws are, we must "search the Scriptures," especially the New-Testament; there we shall find him declaring

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF A CHANGE OF HEART AND LIFE :

Our Saviour says, that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God:" that it is not a mere acknowledging His authority, calling him "Lord, Lord," that will avail any thing, except we do what He commands: that any thing short of this is like a man building his house upon the sands, which, when the storms come on, will certainly fall. In like manner the Apostles are continually enforcing the necessity of this change, which they describe under the various names of "the new man,"*—"the new creature;"†—"a transformation into the image of God;"‡—"a participation of the divine nature." Nor is this change represented as consisting merely in a change of religious opinions, not even in being delivered over from a worse to a better system of doctrines, nor in exchanging gross sins for those which are more sober and reputable; nor in renouncing the sins of youth, and assuming those of a quieter period of life; nor in leaving off evil practices because men are grown tired of them, or find they injure their credit, health, or fortune; nor does it consist in inoffensiveness and

* Ephesians, iv. 24.

† 1st Corinthians, xii.

† Galatians, vi. 25.

|| 2nd Peter, i. 4.

ging manners, nor indeed in any merely *outward* formation.

but the change consists in "being renewed in the spirit of our minds;" in being "conformed to the image of the Son of God;" in being "called out of darkness into His marvellous light." And the whole of this great change, its beginning, progress, and final accomplishment, (for it is represented as a *gradual* change,) is ascribed to

THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We are perpetually reminded of our utter inability to help ourselves, that we may set the higher value on the gracious aids which are held out to us. We are taught that "we are not sufficient to *think* any thing of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." And when we are told that "if we live after the flesh, we shall die," we are at the same time reminded, that "through the *Spirit* that we must mortify the deeds of the body." We are likewise cautioned that we grieve not the Holy Spirit of God;" "that we quench not the Spirit." By all which expressions and many others of like import, we are taught that we are to ascribe with humble gratitude every deed, thought, word, and work, to the influence of the Holy Spirit, we are not to look on such influences as interfering with our own exertions: and it is too plain that we *may* reject the gracious offers of assistance, since otherwise there would be no occasion to caution us not to do it. The Scriptures have illustrated this in terms which are familiar indeed, but which are therefore the more condescending and endearing. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Otherwise, it is not said, if any man will not listen to me, I will force open the door. But if we refuse admittance to such a guest, we must abide by the consequences. The sublime doctrine of divine assistance is the more prized, not only on account of our own helplessness, but from the additional consideration of the powerful adversary with whom the Christian has to con-

tend : an article of our faith, by the way, which growing into general disrepute among the politer class of society. Nay, there is a kind of ridicule attached to the very suggestion of the subject, as if it were expected by a general agreement, on full proof of its being an absolute absurdity, utterly repugnant to the liberal spirit of an enlightened age. And it requires no farneatness of expression and periphrastic ingenuity to the very mention tolerated :—I mean

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE EXISTENCE AND POWER OF OUR GREAT SPIRITUAL ENEMY.

This is considered by the fashionable sceptic as a vulgar invention, which ought to be banished with the beliefs in dreams, and ghosts, and witchcraft :—by the fashionable Christian, as an ingenious allegory, but not a literal truth ; and by almost all,* as a doctrine which when it happens to be introduced at Church, has least nothing to do with the *pews*, but is by common consent made over to the *aistles*, if indeed it must be retained at all.

May I, with great humility and respect, presume to suggest to our divines that they would do well not to lend their countenance to these modish curtailments of the Christian faith ; nor to shun the introduction of this doctrine whenever it consists with their subject, bring it forward ? A truth which is seldom brought before the eye, imperceptibly grows less and less important ; and if it be an unpleasing truth, we grow more and more reconciled to its absence, till at length its intrusion becomes offensive, and we learn in the end to renounce what we at first only neglected. Because some coarse and ranting enthusiasts have been fond of using tremendous terms and awful denunciations with a violence and frequency, which might make it seem to be a gratification to them to denounce judgment and anticipate torments, can *their* coarseness or vulgarity make a true doctrine false, or an important doctrine trifling ? If such preachers have given offence by their uncouth manner of managing an awful doctrine, this indeed furnishes a caution to treat the subject more discreetly, but it is no just reason for avoiding the d

trine. For to keep a truth out of sight because it has been absurdly handled or ill-defended, might in time be assigned as a reason for keeping back, one by one, every doctrine of our holy church; for which of them has not occasionally had imprudent advocates, or weak champions?

Be it remembered that the doctrine in question is not only interwoven by allusion, implication, or direct assertion throughout the whole Scripture, but that it stands prominently *personified* at the opening of the New as well as the Old Testament. The devil's temptation of our Lord, in which he is not represented figuratively, but visibly and palpably, stands exactly on the same ground of authority with other events which are received without repugnance. And it may not be an unuseful observation to remark, that the very refusing to believe in an evil spirit, may be considered as one of his own suggestions; for there is not a more dangerous illusion than to believe ourselves out of the reach of illusions, nor a more alarming temptation than to fancy that we are not liable to be tempted.

But the dark cloud raised by this doctrine will be dispelled by the cheering certainty that our blessed Saviour having himself "been tempted like as we are; "is able to deliver those who are tempted."

To return.—From this imperfect sketch we may see how suitable the religion of Christ is to fallen men! How exactly it meets every want! No one needs now perish because he is a sinner, provided he be willing to forsake his sins; for "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners:" and "He is now exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sin." Which passage, be it observed, may be considered as pointing out to us the *order* in which he bestows his blessings; he gives first *repentance*, and then *forgiveness*.

We may likewise see how much the character of a true Christian rises above every other: that there is a wholeness, an integrity, a completeness in the Christian character: that a few natural, pleasing qualities, not cast in the mould of the Gospel, are but as beautiful fragments, or well-turned single limbs, which for

want of that beauty which arises from the proportion of parts, for want of that connection of the mind with the living head, are of little comparative value. There may be amiable qualities which are Christian graces: and the Apostle, after enumerating every separate article of attack or defence with which a Christian warrior is to be accoutred, sums up the matter by directing that we put on "the whole armour of God." And this *completeness* is insisted on by all the Apostles. One prays that his converts may "stand perfect and complete in the whole will of God?" another enjoins that they be "*perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*"

Now we are not to suppose that they expected an convert to be *without faults*; they knew too well the constitution of the human heart, to form so unfounded an expectation. But Christians must have no fault in their *principle*; their views must be direct, their proposed *scheme* must be faultless; their *intention* must be single; their *standard* must be lofty; their *object* must be right; their "*mark*" must be the high calling of "God in Jesus Christ."—There must be no allowed evil, no warranted defection, no tolerated impurity, no *habitual* irregularity. Though they do not rise as high as they ought, nor as they wish, in the scale of perfection, yet the scale itself must be correct, and the desire of ascending, perpetual: counting nothing done while any thing remains undone. Every grace must be kept exercise; conquests once made over an evil propensity must not only be maintained but extended. And truth, Christianity so comprises contrary, and as it may be thought, irreconcilable excellencies, that those which seem so incompatible as to be incapable by nature of being inmates of the same breast, are almost necessarily involved in the Christian character.

Christianity requires that our faith be sincere and sober; that our love be both ardent and lasting; that our patience be not only heroic and gentle; the demands dauntless zeal and genuineness; active services and complete self-renunciation; high attainments in goodness, with deep consciousness of defect; courage in reproving, and meekness in bearing reproof; a quick perception of what

inful, with a willingness to forgive the offender, the active virtue ready to *do* all, and passive virtue ready to *suffer* all.—We must stretch every faculty in the service of our Lord, and yet bring every thought into obedience to Him : while we aim to live in the exercise of every Christian grace, we must account ourselves unworthy servants : we must *strive* for the crown, yet receive it as a *gift*, and then lay it at our master's feet. While we are busily trading in the world with our God's talents, we must "commune with our hearts and be still :" while we strive to practise the purest disinterestedness, we must be contented though we meet with selfishness in return ; and while laying out ourselves for the good of mankind, we must submit to each without murmuring, and to ingratitude without resentment. And to render us equal to all these services, Christianity bestows not only the precept, but the power ; she does what the great poet of Ethics lamented that Reason could not do, "she lends us arts as well as rules."

For here, if not only the worldly and the timid, but the humble and the well-disposed, should demand with awe and trembling, "Who is sufficient for the service?" Revelation makes its own reviving answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

It will be well here to distinguish that there are two sorts of Christian professors, one of which affects to look on Christianity as if it were a mere system of doctrines, with little reference to their influence on liberal manners ; while the other consider it as exhibiting a scheme of human duties independent on its doctrines. For though the latter sort may admit the doctrines, yet they contemplate them as a separate and unconnected set of opinions, rather than as an influential principle of action.—In violation of that beautiful harmony which subsists in every part of Scripture between practice and belief, the religious world furnishes two sorts of people who seem to enlist themselves, as if in opposition, under the banners of Saint Paul and Saint James ; as if those two great champions of the Christian cause had fought for two masters, one who affects respectively to be the disciples

each, treat faith and works as if they were opposite interests, instead of inseparable points. Nay, they go farther, and set Saint Paul at variance with himself.

Now, instead of reasoning on the point, let us refer to the Apostle in question, who himself definitively settles the dispute. The Apostolical order and method in this respect deserve notice and imitation: for it is observable that the earlier parts of most of the epistles abound in the *doctrines* of Christianity, while those latter chapters, which wind up the subject, exhibit all the *duties* which grow out of them, as the natural and necessary productions of such a living root.* But this alternate mention of doctrine and practice, which seemed likely to *unite*, has on the contrary formed a sort of line of separation between these two orders of believers, and introduced a broken and mutilated system. Those who would make Christianity consist of doctrines only, dwell, for instance, on the first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, as containing exclusively the sum and substance of the Gospel. While the mere moralists, who wish to strip Christianity of her lofty and appropriate attributes, delight to dwell on the *twelfth* chapter, which is a table of duties, as exclusively as if the preceding chapters made no part of the sacred Canon. But Saint Paul himself, who was at least as sound a theologian as any of his commentators, settles the matter another way, by making the duties of the twelfth grow out of the doctrines of the antecedent *eleven*, just as any other consequence grows out of its cause. And as if he suspected that the indivisible union between them might possibly be overlooked, he links the two distinct divisions together by a logical “therefore,” with which the twelfth begins:—“I beseech you *therefore*,” (that is, as the effect of all I have been inculcating,) “that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable to God,” &c. and then goes on to enforce on them, as a consequence

* This is the language of our church, as may be seen in her sixth article: *viz.*

Good works do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; inasmuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by its fruit.

of what he had been preaching, the practice of every Christian virtue. This combined view of the subject seems on the one hand, to be the only means of preventing the substitution of Pagan morality for Christian holiness : and, on the other, of securing the leading doctrine of justification by faith, from the dreadful danger of Antinomian licentiousness ; every human obligation being thus grafted on the living stock of a divine principle.

CHAP. XXI.

On the Duty and Efficacy of Prayer.

IT is not proposed to enter largely on a topic which has been exhausted by the ablest pens. But as a work of this nature seems to require that so important a subject should not be overlooked, it is intended to notice in a slight manner, a few of those many difficulties and popular objections, which are brought forward against the use and efficacy of prayer, even by those who would be unwilling to be suspected of impiety and unbelief.

There is a class of objectors who strangely profess to withhold homage from the Most High, not out of contempt, but reverence. They affect to consider the use of prayer as derogatory from the omniscience of God, asserting that it looks as if we thought he stood in need of being informed of our wants ; and as derogatory from his goodness, as implying that he needs to be put in mind of them.

But is it not enough for such poor frail beings as we are to know, that God himself does not consider prayer as derogatory either to his wisdom or goodness ? And shall *we* erect ourselves into judges of what is consistent with the attributes of HIM before whom angels fall prostrate with self-abasement ? Will he thank such defenders of his attributes, who, while they profess to reverence, scruple not to disobey him ? It ought rather to be viewed as a great encouragement to prayer, that we are addressing a Being, who knows our wants bet-

be thought, that it is arrogant in such
ings as we are, to presume to lay out
before the Great and Glorious God,
expected to condescend to the multitude
even interfering requests which are
him by his creatures. These and such
arise from mean and unworthy thought
Creator. It seems as if those who in-
ered the Most High as "such an one."
Being who can perform a certain given
finest, but who would be overpowerful
tional quantity. Or, at best, is it not
Almighty in the light, not of an infinite
great man, of a minister, or a king, who
perintends public and national concerns
neglect small and individual petitions
hands being full, he cannot spare that
tention which suffice for every thing
consider him as that infinitely glorious
while he beholds at once all that is done
and in earth, is at the same time as a
prayer of the poor destitute, as present
ful sighing of the prisoner, as if each

complexity makes no difficulty, variety no obstruction, and multiplicity no confusion ; that to ubiquity distance does not exist ; that to infinity space is annihilated ; that past, present, and future, are discerned more accurately at one glance of His eye, to whom a thousand years are as one day, than a single moment of time or a single point of space can be by ours.

To the other part of the objection, founded on the supposed interference (that is, irreconcilableness) of one man's petitions with those of another, this answer seems to suggest itself : first, that we must take care that when we ask, we do not "ask amiss ;" that, for instance, we ask chiefly, and in an unqualified manner, only for spiritual blessings to ourselves and others ; and in doing this the prayer of one man *cannot* interfere with that of another, because no proportion of sanctity or virtue implored by one obstructs the same attainments in another. Next, in asking for temporal and inferior blessings, we must *qualify* our petition, even though it should extend to deliverance from the severest pains, or to our very life itself, according to that example of our Saviour : "Father, *if it be possible*, let this cup pass from me. *Nevertheless not my will*, but thine, be done." By thus qualifying our prayer, we exercise ourselves in an act of resignation to God ; we profess not to wish what will interfere with his benevolent plan, and yet we may hope by prayer to secure the blessing so far as it is consistent with it. Perhaps the reason why this objection to prayer is so strongly felt, is the too great disposition to pray for merely temporal and worldly blessings, and to desire them in the most unqualified manner, not submitting to be without them, even though the granting them should be inconsistent with the general plan of Providence.

Another class continue to bring forward, as pertinaciously as if it had never been answered, the exhausted argument, that seeing God is immutable, no petitions of ours can ever change Him : that events themselves being settled in a fixed and unalterable course, and bound in a fatal necessity, it is folly to think that we can disturb the established laws of the universe, or interrupt the course of Providence by our prayers :

objections apply equally to all humans as to prayer. It may therefore with great force be urged, that seeing God is immutable, therefore our *actions* change in Him or in our own state. This is impious reasoning! It may be questioned whether the modern French and Germans can be prevailed upon to acknowledge God, if they might make such a use of Him. The truth is, (and it is a truth difficult to reach by any depth of learning,) all these objections are the offspring of *pride*. Poor, short-sighted mortals! they can never reconcile the omniscience and decrees of God with the efficacy of prayer: and because they cannot, they conclude they are wrong. How much more wisdom as well as piety from an humble Christian spirit! Such a text as, "Draw near unto God," carries more confidence and knowledge of his wants and their remedy in the heart of a penitent sinner, than all the "torments" which have puzzled the world ever since it was first set afloat by its original prop.

And as the plain man only got up to prove there was such a thing as motion, the philosopher who, in an elaborate

be upright, as in a distrust of his own uprightness, as in a doubt whether he himself belongs to that description of persons to whom the promises are made, and of the quality of the prayer which he offers up.

Let the subjects of a dark fate maintain a sullen, or the slaves of a blind chance an hopeless silence, but let the child of a compassionate Almighty Father supplicate His mercies with an humbler confidence, inspired by the assurance, that "the very hairs of his head are numbered." Let him take comfort in that individual and minute attention, without which not a sparrow falls to the ground, as well as in that heart-cheering promise, that, "as the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous," so are "his ears open to their prayers." And as a pious Bishop has observed, "Our Saviour has, as it were, hedged in and inclosed the Lord's prayer with these "two great fences of our faith, God's *willingness* and his *power* to help us:" the preface to it assures us of the one, which by calling God by the tender name of "Our Father," intimates his *readiness* to help his children: and the animating conclusion, "Thine is the *power*," rescues us from every unbelieving doubt of his *ability* to help us.

A Christian knows, because he feels, that prayer is, though in a way to him inscrutable, the medium of connection between God and his rational creatures; the means appointed by him to draw down his blessings upon us. The Christian knows that prayer is the appointed means of uniting two ideas, one of the highest magnificence, the other of the most profound lowliness, within the compass of imagination; namely, that it is the link of communication between "the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity," and that heart of the "contrite in which he delights to dwell." He knows that this inexplicable union between Beings so unspeakably, so essentially different, can only be maintained by prayer; that this is the strong but secret chain which unites time with eternity, earth with heaven, man with God.

The plain Christian, as was before observed, cannot explain why it is so; but while he *feels* the efficacy, he is contented to let the learned *define* it; and he will no

can no more be carried on without it than those of his natural life without food and nourishment. He feels renovation and strength out of the use of the appointed means, as in the one case as in the other. He feels that his soul can no more be sustained, kept in continued vigour by the *prayers* of his friends, than his body by the *aliment* of a distant land.

But there is one motive to the duty of prayer more constraining to the true believer than that that can be named; more imperious than any argument on its utility, than any convictions of its necessity, even than any experience of its consolations: *it is the command of God*; the plain, positive injunction of the Most High, who declares himself "inquired of." This is enough to secure the obedience of the Christian, even though a promise as it always is, attached to the command. It is a case, to our unspeakable comfort, the same as the precept: "Ask, and ye shall have; and ye shall find:—Knock, and it shall be opened to you." This is encouragement to every plain Christian. As to the *manner* in which

never to be assured, that the judge of all the earth is doing right: it is enough for him to be assured in that word of God "which cannot lie," of numberless actual instances of the efficacy of prayer in obtaining blessings and averting calamities, both national and individual: it is enough for him to be convinced experimentally, by that internal evidence which is perhaps paramount to all other evidence, the comfort he himself has received from prayer when all other comforts have failed:—and above all to end with the same motive with which we began, the only motive indeed which *he* requires for the performance of any duty—it is motive enough for him—that *thus saith the Lord*. For when a serious Christian has once got a plain unequivocal command from his Maker on any point, he never suspends his obedience while he is amusing himself with looking about for subordinate motives of action. Instead of curiously analysing the nature of the duty, he considers how he shall best fulfil it: for on these points at least it may be said without controversy, that "the ignorant (and here who is *not* ignorant?) have *nothing to do with the law but to obey it.*"

Others there are, who, perhaps not controverting any of these premises, yet neglect to build practical consequences on the admission of them; who neither denying the duty nor the efficacy of prayer, yet go on to live either in the irregular observance, or the total neglect of it, as appetite, or pleasure, or business, or humour, may happen to predominate; and who by living almost without prayer, may be said "to live almost without God in the world." To such we can only say, that they little know what they lose. The time is hastening on when they will look upon those blessings as invaluable, which now they think not worth asking for; when they will bitterly regret the absence of those means and opportunities which now they either neglect or despise. "O that they were wise! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter end!"

There are again others, who it is to be feared having once lived in the habit of prayer, yet not having been well-grounded in those principles of faith and repentance on which genuine prayer is built, have by degrees totally discontinued it. "They do not

"find," say they, "that their affairs prosper the better or the worse; or perhaps they were unsuccessful in their affairs even before they dropt the practice, and so had no encouragement to go on." They do not *know* that they had no encouragement; they do not *know* how much worse their affairs might have gone on, had they discontinued it sooner, or how their prayers helped to retard their ruin. Or they do not *know* that perhaps "They asked amiss," or that if they had obtained what they asked, they might have been far more unhappy. For a true believer never "restrains prayer," because he is not certain he obtains every individual request; for he is persuaded that God, in compassion to our ignorance, sometimes in great mercy withholds what we desire, and often disappoints his most favoured children by giving them not what they ask, but what he knows is really good for them. The froward child as a pious prelate* observes, cries for the shining blade, which the tender parent withholds, knowing it would cut his fingers.

Thus to persevere when we have not the encouragement of visible success, is an evidence of tried faith. Of this holy perseverance Job was a noble instance. Defeat and disappointment rather stimulated than stopped *his* prayers. Though in a vehement strain of passionate eloquence he exclaims, "I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment;" yet so persuaded was he notwithstanding, of the duty of continuing this holy importunity, that he persisted against all human hope, till he attained to that exalted pitch of unshaken faith by which he was enabled to break out into that sublime apostrophe, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!"

But may we not say that there is a considerable class, who not only bring none of the objections which we have stated against the use of prayer; who are so far from rejecting, that they are exact and regular in the performance of it; who yet take it up on as low ground as is consistent with their ideas of their own safety; who while they consider prayer as an indispensable form, believe nothing of that change of heart and

of those holy tempers which it is intended to produce? Many who yet adhere scrupulously to the letter are so far from entering into the spirit of this duty, that they are strongly inclined to suspect those of hypocrisy who adopt the true scriptural views of prayer. Nay, as even the Bible may be so wrested as to be made to speak almost any language in support of almost any opinion, these persons lay hold on Scripture itself to bear them out in their own slight views of this duty; and they profess to borrow from thence the ground of that censure which they cast on the more serious Christians. Among the many passages which have been made to convey a meaning foreign to their original design none have been seized upon with more avidity by such persons than the pointed censures of our Saviour on those "who for a pretence make long prayers;" as well as those "who use vain repetitions, and think they shall be heard for much speaking." Now the things here intended to be reprov'd were the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the ignorance of the heathen, together with the error of all those who depended on the success of their prayers, while they imitated the deceit of the one, or the folly of the other. But our Saviour never meant those severe reprehensions should cool or abridge the devotion of pious Christians, to which they do not at all apply.

More or fewer words, however, so little constitute the true value of prayer, that there is no doubt but one of the most affecting specimens on record is the short petition of the Publican; full fraught as it is with that spirit of contrition and self-abasement which is the very principle and soul of prayer. And this specimen perhaps is the best model for that sudden lifting up of the heart which we call ejaculation. But I doubt in general, whether those few hasty words to which these frugal petitioners would stick the scanty devotions of others and themselves, will be always found ample enough to satisfy the humble penitent, who, being a sinner, has much to confess; who, hoping he is a pardoned sinner, has much to acknowledge. Such an one perhaps cannot always pour out the fulness of his soul within the prescribed abridgments. Even the sincerest Christian, when he wishes to find his heart

warm, has often to lament its coldness. 'Though he feel that he has received much, and has therefore much to be thankful for, yet he is not able at once to bring his wayward spirit into such a posture as shall fit it for the solemn business; for such an one has not merely his form to repeat, but he has his tempers to reduce to order, his affections to excite, and his peace to make. His thoughts may be realizing the sarcasm of the prophet on the Idol Baal, "they may be gone a journey," and must be recalled; his heart perhaps "sleepeth," and must be awaked." A devout supplicant too, will labour to affect and warm his mind with a sense of the great and gracious attributes of God, in imitation of the holy men of old. Like Jehoshaphat, he will sometimes enumerate "the power, and the might, and "the mercies of the Most High," in order to stir up the sentiments of awe, and gratitude, and love, and humility in his soul." He will labour to imitate the example of his Saviour, whose heart dilated with the expression of the same holy affections. "I thank thee, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth." A heart thus animated, thus warmed with divine love, cannot always scrupulously limit itself to the mere business of prayer, if I may so speak. It cannot content itself with merely spreading out its own necessities, but expands in contemplating the perfections of Him to whom he is addressing them. The humble supplicant, though he be no longer governed by a love of the world, yet grieves to find that he cannot totally exclude it from his thoughts. Though he has on the whole a deep sense of his own wants, and of the abundant provision which is made for them in the Gospel; yet when he most wishes to be rejoicing in those strong motives for love and gratitude, alas! even then he has to mourn his worldliness, his insensibility, his deadness. He has to deplore the littleness and vanity of the objects which are even then drawing away his heart from his Redeemer. The best Christian is but too liable, during the temptations of the day, to be ensnared by "the lust "of the eye, and the pride of life," and is not always brought without effort to reflect that he is but dust and

ashes. How can even good persons, who are just some perhaps from listening to the flattery of their fellow-worms, acknowledge before God, without any preparation of the heart, that they are miserable sinners? They require a little time, to impress on their own souls the truth of that solemn confession of sin they are making to Him, without which brevity and not length, might constitute hypocrisy. Even the sincerely pious have in their prayer grievous wanderings to lament, from which others mistakingly suppose the advanced Christian to be exempt. Such wanderings that, as an old divine has observed, it would exceedingly humble a good man, could he, after he had prayed, be made to see his prayers written down, with exact interlineations of all the vain and impertinent thoughts which had thrust themselves in amongst them. So that such an one will indeed, from a strong sense of these distractions, feel deep occasion with the prophet to ask forgiveness for "the iniquity of his *holly* things:" and would find cause enough for humiliation every night, had he to lament the sins of his prayers only.

We know that such a brief petition as, "Lord, help my unbelief," if the supplicant be in so happy a frame, and the prayer be darted up with such strong faith that his very soul mounts with the petition, may suffice to draw down a blessing which may be withheld from the more prolix petitioner: yet, if by prayer we do not mean a mere form of words, whether they be long or short; if the true definition of prayer be, that it is *the desire of the heart*; if it be that secret communion between God and the soul which is the very breath and being of religion; then is the Scripture so far from suggesting that short measure of which it is accused, that it expressly says, "Pray without ceasing:"—"Pray evermore:"—"I will that men pray every where:"—"Continue instant in prayer."

If such "repetitions" as these objectors reprobate, stir up desires as yet unawakened, or protract affections already excited (for "vain repetitions" are such as awaken or express no new desire, and serve no religious purpose;) then are "repetitions" not to be condemned. And that our Saviour did not give the warning against "long prayers and repetitions" in the sense

in the divine promises if they were this stated intercourse with God, & die. Prayer is also one great encourager of holiness. "If I regard my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

Prayer possesses the twofold property of preparing the heart to receive the blessing in case we should attain them; and disposing it to submit to the will of God, should he his pleasure to withhold the blessing.

A sense of sin should be so far from hindering prayer, through a false plea of unworthiness, that the very consciousness of sin, growing on this very contrast and strongest incentive to prayer, our example and encouragement, a bold faith and humility in the Prodigal—
"against heaven and before Thee, as
"worthy to be called thy Son." These seem to imply hopelessness of pardon, but tend to promote unwillingness to ask it; the contrite hearted penitent drew the direct contrary.
"I will arise, and go to my Father!"

Prayer, to make it accepted, require

elf, and entire dependance on another. It is the voice of the beggar who would be relieved ; of the sinner who would be pardoned. It has nothing to offer but pain and sorrow ; nothing to ask but forgiveness and acceptance ; nothing to plead but the promises of the Gospel in the death of Christ. It never seeks to obtain its object by diminishing the guilt of sin, but by exalting the merits of the Saviour.

But as it is the effect of prayer to *expand* the affections as well as to *sanctify* them, the benevolent Christian is not satisfied to commend himself alone to the divine favour. The heart which is full of the love of God will overflow with love to its neighbour. All that are near to himself he wishes to bring near to God. He will present the whole human race as objects of the divine compassion, but especially the faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Religion makes a man so liberal of soul, that he cannot endure to restrict anything, much less divine mercies, to himself : he therefore spiritualizes the social affections, by adding intercession to personal prayer : for he knows, that petitioning for others is one of the best methods of exercising and enlarging our own love and charity, even if it were not to draw down those blessings which are promised to those for whom we ask them. It is unnecessary to produce any of the numberless instances with which Scripture abounds, on the efficacy of intercession : in which God has proved the truth of his own assurance that " his ear was open to their cry." I shall confine myself to a few observations on the benefits it brings to him who offers it.—When we pray for the objects of our dearest regard, it purifies passion, and exalts love into religion : when we pray for those with whom we have worldly intercourse, it smooths down the swellings of envy, and bids the tumults of anger and ambition subside : when we pray for our country, it sanctifies patriotism : when we pray for those in authority, it adds a divine motive to human obedience : when we pray for our enemies, it softens the savageness of war, and mollifies hatred into tenderness, and resentment into sorrow. And we can only learn the duty so difficult to human nature, of forgiving those who have offended us, when we bring our-

selves to pray for them to Him whom we ourselves daily offend. When those who are the faithful followers of the same Divine Master pray for each other, the reciprocal intercession delightfully realizes that beautiful idea of "the communion of Saints." There is scarcely any thing which more enriches the Christian than the circulation of this holy commerce; than the comfort of believing, while he is praying for his Christian friends, that he is also reaping the benefit of their prayers for him.

Some are for confining their intercessions only to the good, as if none but persons of merit were entitled to our prayers. Merit! who has it? Desert! who can plead it? in the sight of God, I mean. Who shall bring his own piety, or the piety of others, in the way of *claim*, before a Being of such transcendent holiness, that "the heavens are not clean in his sight?" And if we wait for perfect holiness, as a preliminary to prayer, when shall such erring creatures pray *at all* to Him "who chargeth the Angels with folly!"

In closing this little work with the subject of intercessory prayer, may the Author be allowed to avail herself of the feeling it suggests to her own heart? And while she earnestly implores that Being, who can make the meanest of his creatures instrumental to his glory, to bless this humble attempt to those for whom it was written, may she, without presumption, entreat that this work of Christian Charity may be reciprocal, and that those who peruse these pages may put up a petition for her, that in the great day to which we are all hastening, she may not be found to have suggested to others what she herself did not believe, or to have recommended what she did not desire to practise? In that awful day of everlasting decision, may both the reader and the writer be pardoned and accepted, "not for any" "works of righteousness which they have done," but through the merits of the GREAT INTERCESSOR.

THE END.

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